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# Schopenhauer and the Later Schelling in Dialogue on Mythology and Religion\*

*Dennis Vanden Auweele / University of Leuven and  
University of Groningen*

In order to have a fruitful dialogue, all participants ought to agree on some things and disagree on others. Without some agreement, there is no vantage point from which to start the conversation; without some disagreement, the dialogue might as well be a monologue. Do the later Schelling and Schopenhauer meet these criteria? More specifically, are their respective analyses of the allegorical (Schopenhauer) or tautegorical (Schelling) truth of religion/mythology sufficiently promising for mutual enrichment? The differences between, on the one hand, the atheist and pessimist Schopenhauer and, on the other hand, the Christian apologist and idealist Schelling seem obvious enough. But both authors entertain certain interesting similarities, such as, on the one hand, their opposition to Hegelian dialectical philosophy and, on the other hand, their relationship to Romanticism.

Hegel's philosophy sought to reconcile the difference between Enlightenment rationality and Romantic feeling. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), he mediates—and thus sublates the opposition between—the inwardness of Romanticism and the rationalism of the Enlightenment. For him, Romanticism's appeal to art and religion is, equally as Enlightenment rationalism, an expression of reason and *Geist*. This means that Hegel recognizes the distinction between religion and philosophy but reads both of these as expressions of the same spirit. Around the time Hegel first published his most comprehensive account of this philosophical reconciliatory project in the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817), two thinkers, Schopenhauer and the later Schelling, already expressed serious hesitations with regard

\* I would like to extend my gratitude to Jonathan Head and the reviewers of the *Journal of Religion* for extensive comments. An earlier version of this essay was presented at the University of Southampton. Special thanks to Elseltijn Kingma, David Woods, and Christopher Janaway for their feedback.



to the commensurability of religion and philosophy. But perhaps they were only stragglers that aimed to resist the onslaught of Hegelian dialectic.<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps their perspectives on a “dark origin” of reality, which finds potent expression in art, religion, and mythology, pierce through a certain Hegelian naïveté.<sup>2</sup> This opposition to Hegelian dialectic can easily be interpreted as an elevation of Romanticism over the Enlightenment. Indeed, the later Schelling and Schopenhauer are united in their respective link to Romanticism. Josiah Royce assigned the sobriquet “prince of the Romantics” to Schelling, and Schopenhauer’s most well-known pupil, Friedrich Nietzsche, read Schopenhauer as a Romantic who exalted art and feeling over philosophical reflection.<sup>3</sup> Whether or not Schopenhauer and Schelling actually blend in with Romanticism would largely depend on one’s understanding of Romanticism.<sup>4</sup> Whatever way it is read, Schelling and Schopenhauer stand, in some sense, in a symbiotic relationship to Romanticism.

<sup>1</sup> References to Schopenhauer’s work follow Arthur Hübscher’s edition: Arthur Schopenhauer, *Sämtliche Werke in 7 Bänden*, ed. Arthur Hübscher (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1937). The translation is, where available, taken from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Arthur Schopenhauer: The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 1, ed. Judith Norman, Alistair Welchman, and Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), cited as *WWV1*; *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*, ed. Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), cited as *BGE*; *The World as Will and Presentation*, vol. 2, trans. David Carus and Robert Aquila (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011), cited as *WWV2*; and *Parerga and Paralipomena*, vol. 2, trans. and ed. Adrian Del Caro and Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), cited as *PP2*. References to Schelling’s work follow the edition of Schelling’s son, Karl Friedrich August: Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. K. F. A. Schelling (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1856–64). The translation is taken from F. W. J. Schelling, *Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1936), cited as *HF*; *The Ages of the World*, trans. Jason Wirth (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2000), cited as *AW*; *The Grounding of Positive Philosophy*, trans. Bruce Matthews (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), cited as *GPP*; and *Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology*, trans. Mason Richey and Markus Zisselsberger (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007), cited as *HCM*.

<sup>2</sup> The later Schelling’s relationship to German Idealism has been especially prone to controversy. Some think of him as defending a point of view totally alien to German Idealism, as well as his very own “System of Transcendental Idealism” (1800): Horst Fuhrmans, “Der Ausgangspunkt der Schellingschen Spätphilosophie,” *Kant-Studien* 48 (1956–57): 302–23; Xavier Tillet, *Schelling: Une philosophie de devenir* (Vrin: 1970). Others argue that the later Schelling singled out certain aspects of reality that were underappreciated in German Idealism, without thereby necessarily standing outside of German Idealism. Lothar Knatz describes this as “Nicht hinter Kant zurück, aber über Kant hinaus” (*Geschichte, Kunst, Mythos: Schellings Philosophie und die Perspektive einer philosophischen Mythostheorie* [Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999], 14). See also Walter Kasper, *Das Absolute in der Geschichte* (Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald, 1965); Walter Schulz, *Die Vollendung des Deutschen Idealismus in der Spätphilosophie Schellings* (Stuttgart: Neske, 1975).

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, “Schopenhauer as Educator,” in *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale and ed. Daniel Breazeale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 125–95. See in particular the second preface, “An Attempt at Self-Criticism,” of *The Birth of Tragedy* in Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3–12.

<sup>4</sup> I have explored in some detail Schopenhauer’s relationship to Romanticism: Dennis Vanden Auweele, “Schopenhauer and the Paradox of Genius,” *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy* 20 (2015): 149–68.



## Schopenhauer and Schelling on Mythology and Religion

Both above elements also explain why the later Schelling (not the early Schelling) and Schopenhauer are usually read in the context of post-Hegelian rather than post-Kantian philosophy.<sup>5</sup> As a result, they are thought of primarily as dialoging with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche rather than with Kant and each other. Nevertheless, their projects coincide temporally with Hegel's philosophy, and they might have found (if they were willing to recognize this) an ally in each other's works. Without going into any further detail with regard to Hegel's philosophy of religion,<sup>6</sup> this essay will recuperate some of the more salient arguments of Schelling and Schopenhauer that afford religion and mythology a more central and unique function in history and human consciousness. To put it concisely, mythology and religion (as well as art) are for Hegel stages in the self-development of spirit (from subjective over objective toward absolute spirit) that, through a process of historical recognition, are determinately overcome by dialectical philosophy. The later Schelling and Schopenhauer propose a point of view that assigns a more robust function to religion, even if Schelling is the one that carries this point further than Schopenhauer.<sup>7</sup> Religion can achieve something, according to Schopenhauer and the later Schelling, that philosophy cannot: philosophy cannot educate the masses (Schopenhauer); philosophy cannot make us aware of the proto-philosophical aspects of reality (Schelling). Additionally, Schopenhauer and the later Schelling also oppose a certain type of philosophy that is overly concerned with conceptual thought, which Schopenhauer calls dogmatic and Schelling calls negative.

This engagement between the later Schelling and Schopenhauer on religion and mythology in dialogical form compares and clarifies the similarities and differences between their views. To do so, we will discuss (1) the potential lack of truth in mythology for Schelling and Schopenhauer, (2) Schopenhauer's claims of truth through allegory in mythology (as well as in religion), (3) Schelling's objections to this allegorical interpretation, (4) Schelling's positive philosophy that provides the ground for a different interpretation of mythology, (5) Schelling's tautegorical interpretation of mythology, and (6) Schopenhauer's rejoinder to Schelling.

<sup>5</sup> For a concise treatment of this problem: Marcello Ruta, *Schopenhauer et Schelling, philosophes du temps et de l'éternité: La deuxième voie du post-kantisme* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014), 35–49; Lore Hühn, "Die Wiederkehr des Verdrängten: Überlegungen zur Rolle des Anfangs bei Schelling und Schopenhauer," *Schopenhauer Jahrbuch* 86 (2005): 55–69.

<sup>6</sup> I have discussed this elsewhere: Dennis Vanden Auweele, "Reconciliation, Incarnation, and Headless Hegelianism," *Faith and Philosophy* 34 (2017): 201–22.

<sup>7</sup> One cautionary note: I will limit my discussion of Schelling to his views regarding mythology and leave revealed religion to the side. The reason for this is that this essay investigates the origin of religion, which for Schelling is historically first present in mythology. As will be dealt with in more detail below, Schelling even believes that the purpose of mythology is to render consciousness receptive to revelation. According to Schopenhauer, the distinction between religion and mythology collapses which allows for his general account of religion to apply to mythology without restraint.



# The Journal of Religion

## I. SCHELLING AND SCHOPENHAUER ON A POTENTIAL LACK OF TRUTH IN RELIGION

The question "Is religion true?" could be taken in two senses. On the one hand, this could query whether the systematic worldview espoused by a particular religion—for example, belief in a single or multiple deities, a moral code, an afterlife, and so on—actually corresponds to the facts. From this perspective, religion might conflict with other systems of thought, such as metaphysics and natural science, that profess a different worldview. I do not find this approach very promising. On the other hand, this question could be rephrased as "Is there truth in religion?" This way, the question of the truth of religion does not query whether a particular religion as a systematic whole consistently corresponds to reality but whether a particular religion gives expression to something truthful even though its propositional message might not correspond to the facts of reality. Different religions and even mythologies might then equally be true without having the same outward message, as long as the inner message gives expression to the same truth. Schopenhauer and Schelling both discuss religion from this latter tack, which not only makes them pay equal attention to Western and Oriental religion, as well as Oriental and Western mythology, but allows them to develop a perspective wherein philosophy, religion, and mythology derive from a similar source.

Schopenhauer makes it unmistakably clear that any religion purporting to be a theoretical system of propositional truths is very far from the truth. When it comes to facts, only philosophy and to a certain extent science is able to provide a compelling and comprehensive account of reality. With respect to religion, Schopenhauer is best known for his full-out assault on theological sophistry in favor of a more sober philosophical perspective on the truth. The sobriety of this perspective derives from its atheist, monist, and naturalist character: no absolute being, no different substances, and no qualitative differences between substances. The will, which gives expression to reality, is the whole of reality. This aspect of Schopenhauer's philosophy resonated powerfully in Nietzsche's philosophy, who read Schopenhauer as someone who was intuitively atheist: "The ungodliness of existence counted for him as something given, palpable, indisputable."<sup>8</sup> None of this requires opposition, merely nuance. To entertain solely this reductive perspective on the appreciation of religion of the misanthropic sage of Frankfurt—a sobriquet coined by John Oxenford in his famous review of Schopenhauer's work titled "Iconoclasm in German Philosophy" (1853)—is dangerously misleading. While Schopenhauer famously believed that there is but one truth, he was convinced that this truth could be expressed in a myriad of forms. Therefore, Schopenhauer does not out of hand reject religious or even artistic language to convey this basic truth. Nondogmatic philosophy is simply

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, ed. Bernard Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 219.



the superior mode of presentation, but art and religion can equally express this truth in their own unique ways.

The decisive difference between philosophy and religion is primarily to be found in the means of justifying that truth: the former is justified “in itself” while the latter is justified “outside itself” (WWV2, 180); in other words, philosophy is based on “conviction” while religion is based on “faith” (WWV2, 181); in yet other words, philosophy expresses truth “*sensu proprio*” and religion expresses truth “*sensu allegorico*” (WWV2, 183). Obviously, religion cannot admit to its allegorical nature and must present its creeds as literally true. This can be very dangerous to philosophical (and scientific) progress. In his dialogue “On Religion,” Schopenhauer’s mouthpiece Philalethes recognizes that most people require religion to assuage their metaphysical need, but that this does not mean that he ought to respect these “lies”: “I do not see why I should have respect for a pack of lies due to the simple-mindedness of others” (PP2, 343). From this, it can be gathered that Schopenhauer holds that religion often acts as the “antagonist *ex officio*” to human progress since it forbids “a person’s free exploration of the most important and interesting matters, of his very existence” (PP2, 14).

While philosophy and religion can conflict if they entreat on each other’s domain, they are equally enabled to give expression to the same thing by different means. This is so because both emerge in response to a metaphysical need that requires satisfaction. All comprehensive explanations of reality—so religion and philosophy both—are a response to this metaphysical need that emerges because of the confrontation with the finitude of human existence:<sup>9</sup> “It is without doubt the knowledge of death and, along with this, consideration of life’s suffering and hardship that provides the strongest impetus to philosophical reflection and metaphysical explanations of reality” (WWV2, 176). At first, this metaphysical need quite literally means to carry our physical needs—mainly self-preservation—beyond the physical. Our metaphysical need then gives rise to metaphysics, which is “all supposed cognizance that goes beyond the possibility of experience, and so beyond nature or things in their given phenomenon, in order to inform us as to how, in one or another sense, they are conditioned” (WWV2, 180). This means that religion and philosophy both arise initially to provide a way to quell the fear of death by providing some form of “survival after death” (WWV2, 177).

Ideally, this metaphysical need would be quelled by truthful metaphysics. The ultimate, ideal purpose of philosophy and religion is the same, namely, “to be true” (WWV2, 209). But if metaphysics arises in response to a need, does this not by definition obstruct the possibility for it to be truthful? For anyone familiar with Schopenhauer’s more comprehensive, pessimistic phi-

<sup>9</sup> A lot more can be said about this metaphysical need. For more extensive discussion of its pedagogic function, see Jonathan Head, “Schopenhauer on the Development of the Individual,” *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy* 20 (2016): 427–46.

losophy, such a metaphysical need seems like just one more expression of our will to life, and therefore more alike to a will-o'-the-wisp than a savior! Schopenhauer is best known for his pessimism, first outlined in sections 56–59 of *The World as Will and Representation, Volume I*: human life is disproportionately filled with suffering. A full outline of Schopenhauer's pessimism is beyond the scope of this essay.<sup>10</sup> The general message is that human beings are the expression of infinite will, which translates into the infinite amount of objects to which the human will is inclined. To desire means to be in pain, and desire is never ending, so pain is never ending. This means that "human life is dispositionally incapable of true happiness" (WWV1, 381). Schopenhauer's works are saturated with rich images that vivify what this means: "We are fundamentally something that should not be" (WWV2, 579); "the life of every individual is in fact always a tragedy" (WWV1, 380); "a person is a being whose existence is a punishment and a penance" (WWV2, 663); "human beings are on the whole worthless" (WWV1, 415).

But this lamentable condition derives from our willingness to be a willing thing. Should we forfeit our desires—something in which religion, ethics, and art can provide a helping hand—we could find ourselves in a better state. This is what Schopenhauer calls the denial (*Verneinung*) of the will to life: ethics, art, religion, and philosophy can affect our will so powerfully that they act as a narcotic on willing. The conative force of the will is nullified and we no longer suffer. But if the denial of the will is the proper recourse for human beings, how can the satisfaction of a metaphysical need, which is still a need (*Bedürfnis*), be a solution? Precisely from this perspective, Schopenhauer advances the thesis that there could well be a lack of determinate truth in any metaphysics, whether philosophical or religious. Since these initially emerge as fabrications responding to a subjective need, they are not an objective representation of reality, whether an existential or factual truth.

What is even worse, these metaphysical fabrications tend to be optimistic. This means that they suggest that human agents are able to arrive at happiness, whether through satisfaction of their desires (eudaimonism) or through certain moral works (Catholicism). This problem is not unique to religion since (dogmatic) philosophy can similarly be an obstacle to human progress if it is optimistic. The predominant belief in philosophical optimism is that through the exercise of the natural mode of behavior, specifically by fulfilling particular desires, the human agent reaches a unobjectionable state of being, namely, happiness.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For insightful notes, see Mark Migotti, "Schopenhauer's Pessimism and the Unconditioned Good," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 33 (1995): 643–60; Christopher Janaway, "Schopenhauer's Pessimism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*, ed. Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 318–43.

<sup>11</sup> Religion could then be untrue if it gives expression to optimism. I have detailed elsewhere what exactly renders a religion optimistic or pessimistic to Schopenhauer. A pessimistic religion (1) regards existence as punishment, (2) denies the soteriological potential of works (rational or moral), (3) promotes compassion as a stepping stone to asceticism, (4) surrounds its dog-



The most important problem that Schopenhauer detects with regard to religion has not so much to do with its nature, but in being prone to optimism. Philosophy has the same problem. Schopenhauer does add that the dogmas of religions are often inculcated early in someone's life so that they are very hard to extricate (PP2, 346), while philosophical ideas are more malleable and thus more given to change (PP2, 366–67). The education given by optimistic religions is dangerous since they “oppose the progress of humanity in cognizance of the truth [and] must be considerably pushed to one side” (WWV2, 185). Schopenhauer is here thinking particularly of Judaism and Islam. The central difference between religions lies not in their outward clothing—such as whether they are theistic, deistic, pantheistic, polytheistic, and so on—but their inner messages that either attune to natural optimism or eschew this for a more pessimistic point of view: “The fundamental difference in religions lies in whether they are [an expression of] optimism or pessimism” (PP2, 412; cf. WWV2, 187–88). Any optimism in religion is then a sign of a determinate lack of truth in that religion.

Schopenhauer does not really account for this, but while religions emerge in response to a metaphysical need, they can give allegorical expression to pessimism. In the final section of this essay, I return to this issue and suggest a similarity with Schopenhauer's aesthetics. If religion expresses pessimism, they can practically cultivate an inner attitude of pessimism and compassion that can work to the benefit of humanity. This is why Philaethes's conversation partner Demopheles interjects that the practical or moral function of religion must take precedence over any theoretical or speculative function: “Above all it is important to restrain the brutal and lowly dispositions of the masses” (PP2, 350). In response, Philaethes enumerates numerous examples of how religion has been to the moral detriment of humanity (PP2, 370–72). They ultimately reach the consensus that religion can work to the benefit of humanity but often has not (PP2, 382).

Schelling engages the issue of the potential lack of truth in religion from a seemingly unrelated perspective, but he objects equally to making mythology about factual truth: “It is not at all the things with which man deals in the mythological process by which consciousness is moved, but rather it is the *powers arising in the interior of consciousness itself*” (HCM, 207). When Schelling first addresses whether there is truth in mythology, he is drawn to dialogue with the view which he calls the “poetic” (*Dichtung*). He deals with this view first, because he believes that “all other and more obvious views must first be explained as *impossible*, and it itself must have become the *only possible* one, before we can consider it as grounded” (HCM, 5). To account for the emergence of

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mas with a sense of mystery (against rational religion), and (5) presents its teaching through allegorical message that is not likely to be taken literally. If religion is optimistic, it provides certain illusions that enforce the natural, optimistic disposition in human beings. See Dennis Vanden Auweele, “Schopenhauer on Religious Pessimism,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 78 (2015): 53–71.

mythology, Schelling believes that the most modest and least demanding point of view has to be entertained first. If and only if this view is not satisfactory, then we may entertain a more complex view, namely, a philosophy of mythology.

The poetic view of religion suggests that “the mythological representations have been generated not with the intent to *assert* or *teach* something but rather only in order to satisfy a (of course, at first incomprehensible) poetic drive for invention” (*HCM*, 11–12). This view holds that poets, such as Homer and Hesiod, are the inventors of Greek mythology. This view would deny any truth potential in mythology by relegating it to mere storytelling. Schelling is, however, quick to discard this view. He does so by drawing a distinction between the origin of myth in mythic consciousness, and the poetic or mythological representation of those myths. In fact, it might be accurate to claim that poets are the fathers of mythology, that is, the systematic representation of mythic stories, but not of myth itself. In Schelling’s view, “nothing can simply be poetically invented, simply be plucked from the air” (*HCM*, 12).

The poetic view of mythology would claim that individuals simply invented, on the spot, mythological stories. Far more likely seems the view that the poets responded to something that was already communicated in an oral tradition, which signals that myth was already present in human consciousness prior to being written down and even prior to being conscious of myth. At one point, myth was experienced and lived rather than written down and debated. For Schelling, this means that mythology was “thematically present prior to both poets [Herodotus and Hesiod], [even if] only in a dark consciousness” (*HCM*, 17). Poetry is not the origin of myth, but the way in which myth emerge out of the darkness of mythic consciousness. As Schelling eloquently notes, “the dark foundry, the first forging place of mythology, lies beyond all poesy [*Poesie*]” (*HCM*, 18). From this it can be gathered that believing that poetry is the cause of myth means reversing the causal connection between poetry and myth: “Poesy could indeed be the natural end and even the necessarily immediate product of mythology; however, as actual poetry (and to what end would it serve to speak of a poetry *in potential*?) it could not be the generative ground, the source of the representations of the gods” (*HCM*, 20–21).<sup>12</sup> At one point, Schopenhauer provides a more positive ex-

<sup>12</sup> An additional argument provided by Schelling to dismantle the claim that poets invented mythology from scratch is that the different mythologies of the world are highly similar (*HCM*, 22–25). This makes sense: if mythology arises from a universal source, it is bound to show similarities (my gratitude to Jonathan Head for pointing this out to me). This also explains why Schelling and Schopenhauer were both enthusiastic readers of Eastern mythology. Truthfully, they could only really get to a fairly limited level of understanding of other traditions compared to our contemporary awareness of world religions and mythology. The similarities they then detect between these traditions might be due to their enthusiasm. For instance, Schopenhauer’s claims such as “Buddha’s *Samsara* and *Nirvana* are identical to the two cities of Augustine” (*PP2*, 391) or “the doctrine of *Zendavesta*, from which Judaism is known to stem” (*PP2*, 402) or “the New Testament . . . must somehow be of Indian origin” (*PP2*, 404) are to be taken *cum grano salis*.



pression of the poetic view of mythology which is connected to his allegorical interpretation of mythology and religion: "The mythology of the Greeks has from the beginning provided material for allegorical interpretation, because it invites this by delivering schemata for visualizing almost every fundamental idea, indeed, in a certain sense it contains the archetypes of all things and relationships, which, precisely as such, shine through always and everywhere; after all, it arose actually from the playful drive of the Greeks to personify everything" (*PP2*, 434–35; cf. *PP2*, 384–85). In his view, the artistic and poetic drive of the Greeks was so powerful that it naturally extended itself to personify philosophical and moral concepts. Schopenhauer therefore allows for the aesthetic drive to be the prime ground of mythology without reducing mythology to mere artistic fancy. This more charitable view of the poetic interpretation will return at the end of this essay, but this recourse is not the path that Schelling will follow. Schopenhauer and Schelling allow for there to be something truthful expressing itself in mythology/religion. While Schopenhauer allows that many religions might be devoid of truth (particularly Judaism and Islam), Schelling will attempt to show how there is a kernel of truth in any mythology. This strategy seems, up to this point, remarkably similar to Hegel's philosophy. The decisive difference will exist in the content of that truth. For Hegel, the truth is the self-development and coming to self-consciousness of spirit; for the later Schelling and Schopenhauer, the truth is a proto-philosophical act (not thought) of reality emerging from the irrational. Schelling and Schopenhauer differ, however, in how this comes to pass. For Schopenhauer, religions give allegorical expression to truth, while Schelling attempts to show how mythology tautegorically expresses the dark confines of human consciousness. And, "the primordial material onto which all of this crystallized, consists of occurrences and events that belong to an entirely different order of things (not only than the historical, but also the human one), the heroes of which are gods, an apparently indeterminate lot of religiously venerated personalities who form amongst themselves a particular world" (*HCM*, 6–7).

## II. SCHOPENHAUER ON TRUTH THROUGH ALLEGORY IN RELIGION

Schopenhauer and Schelling both allow for truth to express itself through religion or mythology. How exactly does this then occur? According to Schopenhauer, the truth of pessimism expresses itself allegorically and symbolically in religion while it does so by means of argument in philosophy. Truthful philosophy is sustained by argument but builds upon an intuitive, prerational awareness (a point Schopenhauer shares with Schelling). Especially suited to the unenlightened masses, "the various religions are simply different schemata in which the people grasp and visualize the truth that in itself is incomprehensible to them" (*PP2*, 344).

The aforementioned metaphysical need of people can attempt to find recourse in certain optimistic religions that actually grant survival after death; or, what is better, the metaphysical need can be quelled by a more informed means. Schopenhauer believes that any attempts to reach happiness through the satiation of desires will necessarily lead to continued unhappiness because of the limitless number of particular desires (because the infinite nature of desire as such) and the will's insistence on willing, often manifesting as boredom. Rather than remaining involved in this circuitry of pain and boredom, pessimism provides the means to escape this circle. This is done by inducing a bit of knowledge that numbs the root of desire.<sup>13</sup> Certain pessimistic religions have attuned to this view of reality and accordingly have their inner message attuned to it, which receives expression in stories, allegories, and symbols.

An example might be helpful here. Schopenhauer argues that all of reality is essentially will and all particular individuals are the expression of this will. Particularity and individuality is then an illusion brought about by the principle of individuation. Differences between individuals are ultimately not real. By somehow incorporating this bit of knowledge (Schopenhauer remains mysterious about this), a human agent can cease to make the egoist distinction between himself and others; as a result, the agent experiences the needs and the sufferings of the other to an equal extent as his or her own. From this emerges compassion, which induces agents to undo the suffering of the other. The way I understand it, a pessimistic religion might give expression to this philosophical truth as follows. In Christianity, human beings are children of the same heavenly father. Much like love and compassion are easily and naturally experienced for one's family members, so we should extend our notion of family to all human beings, even our enemies. By incorporating this religious story, the allegorical truth behind it might, similar to the philosophical argument, induce loving kindness and compassion among human beings. In Schopenhauer's view, Buddhism supersedes Christianity in its moral fiber because Buddhists extend the mystical unity of reality toward animals as well (*BGE*, 245–46).

Philosophy and religion have radically different manners of expression that ought to restrict themselves to their proper audiences. This is also why Schopenhauer feels the need to distance himself from so-called philosophy of religion (*Religionsphilosophie*). In his view, this perspective confuses the modes of operation of religion and philosophy: "So-called philosophy of religion, which, as a kind of Gnostic wisdom, attempts to interpret given religions and to explain what is true *sensu allegorico* through something that is true *sensu proprio*" (*WWV2*, 185). Schopenhauer does not object to finding a proper

<sup>13</sup> It is beyond the scope of this essay to develop in full the intricacies and paradoxes of Schopenhauer's ethics and soteriology. For further discussion, see Neil Jordan, *Schopenhauer's Ethics of Patience: Virtue, Salvation, and Value* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2009); Gerard Mannion, *Schopenhauer, Religion and Morality: The Humble Path to Ethics* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).



truth in religion, only to obscuring philosophical and religious language. Religion is allegorically true, philosophy is literally true. Schopenhauer disarms the discussion between what he calls “supernaturalists” and “rationalists” from this perspective. The former miss the allegorical nature of religion by taking it as literally true: “[They] want to maintain [Christian doctrine] without subtraction, as it were with hide and hair; thereby, they are in a difficult situation in view of the knowledge and the general culture of the age” (WWV2, 184). The latter similarly miss the allegorical nature of religion by rationalizing its hyperbolic elements (such as divine election, grace, etc.): “The latter, by contrast, seek to interpret away [*hinauszuexegisieren*] everything specifically Christian; thereby they retain something that is not true either sensu proprio or sensu allegorico, but rather a mere platitude, virtually Judaism, or at most shallow Pelagianism, and, worst of all, base optimism that is entirely foreign to Christianity proper” (ibid.). The perspective then taken by Schopenhauer’s Demopheles is that religion “does not stand opposed to truth, for it itself teaches truth,” namely, by serving as a “mythical vehicle” for a truth otherwise inaccessible to the masses (PP2, 352). Demopheles is a “friend of the people” because he realizes that the metaphysical need of human agents must be quenched; and, since there are those “of whom thinking cannot be asked” (WWV2, 184), they must have a recourse in something more palpable to their limited intellect than the abstract argumentation of philosophy. If not, they might be utterly bereft of any recourse from the misery of life. Philalethes fears, however, that this metaphysical need is prone to abuse and the best option would be to avoid any deceit whatsoever, even when well-intended: “It boils down to truth disguised as lie . . . what kind of dangerous weapon is put in the hands of those who obtain the authority to use untruth as a vehicle for truth” (PP2, 353). Rather than condemning the mass of mankind to remain in a position of tutelage and servitude to religion, Philalethes adamantly emphasizes the following: “Meanwhile we do not want to give up hope that mankind will one day reach the point of maturity and culture where they are on the one hand capable of producing and on the other hand of adopting the true philosophy” (PP2, 357). Demopheles counters, however, by pointing out that Philalethes “[has] no adequate concept of the miserable capacity of the masses” (ibid.). This leads the two to come to the consensus that religion has two faces, namely, a kind one that would provide succour to the masses incapable of philosophical insight but also a nasty one that would impede or even halt intellectual progress by disregarding religion’s allegorical nature (PP2, 382).

### III. SCHELLING’S COUNTERPOINT TO THE ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION

Schopenhauer thus holds that religion can be a kind of surrogate or ersatz philosophy by expressing metaphysical truth through allegory and symbol.

Interestingly, Schopenhauer then seems to argue that mythology, religion, and philosophy, at their best obviously, derive from a similar root—namely, a desire grown from the metaphysical need of mankind. While obviously coming rather close to Hegel's point of view in this, Schopenhauer clearly distinguishes himself from his hated adversary by emphasizing that the grim truth behind religion is not progress toward rationality. In extension of this, Schopenhauer argues for the perennial infirmity of most of humanity and the continued need for religion.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Schopenhauer emphasizes that older religions/mythologies tended toward being closer to true wisdom (which is the opposite of Hegel's argument): "In early ages upon the present surface of the earth, things were different, and those who were considerably closer than we are to the origination of the human race and to the original source of organic nature also possessed, partly, greater energy in their powers of intuitive cognizance and partly a more accurate attunement of mind, by which they were capable of a purer, immediate apprehension of the essence of nature" (*WWV2*, 178). Schelling refuses to take mythology and religion as allegorical expressions of a truth more soberly expressed in philosophy. While Schelling agrees with Hegel that all religions are able to give expression to a certain truth (contra Schopenhauer), he believes (similarly as Schopenhauer) that this truth is not rational. In other words, while the philosophical expression of the truth of *Wille* (Schopenhauer) or *Geist* (Hegel) is clearly the *summum* of, respectively, Schopenhauer's and Hegel's philosophy, Schelling more cautiously allows mythology and religion to be the expression of a profound truth, of which only they can be the expression. This truth is proto-philosophical rather than philosophical (this will be unpacked below).

Schelling describes the allegorical interpretation of mythology as follows: "Truth is in mythology, but not in mythology as such; especially since it is the doctrine and history of the *gods*, and thus seems to have a religious meaning. Thus mythology says or seems to say something different than is meant" (*HCM*, 23). In order to counter this interpretation, Schelling advances the thesis that mythology is "not *allegorical*; it is *tautegorical*. To mythology the gods are actually existing essences, gods that are not something *else*, do not *mean* something else, but rather *mean* only what they are" (*HCM*, 195–96).

To discredit the allegorical view, Schelling advances a number of arguments.<sup>15</sup> First, if the actual, inner essence of mythology consists in the ex-

<sup>14</sup> On some rare occasions, Schopenhauer displays unusual optimism with regard to intellectual progress in Western society. In a later work of his, he expresses faith that humanity will progressively come to terms with the denial of the will to life as the proper mode of living: "Now since we have concluded from the results of my serious philosophy (in contrast to the mere professorial or comic philosophy) that the will's turning away from life is the ultimate aim of temporal existence, we must assume that we shall all be gradually guided in that direction in a way individually suited to us, thus often through long detours" (*PPI*, 236).

<sup>15</sup> Schelling was unaware of Schopenhauer's allegorical interpretation of religion and mythology. Obviously, Schopenhauer was not the first and will not be the last to advance a thesis



pression of another truth—whether moral, philosophical, or scientific—then it must necessarily follow that the ultimate purpose of mythology is “more atheistic than theistic” and “does not merely want to know nothing of gods, but rather that [the author of mythology’s] *intent* is even *polemical*, directed against already present representations of the gods” (*HCM*, 39–40). By this, Schelling means to say that mythology would not have been intended or even directed at actual belief in supernatural entities or at irrational belief at all. Instead, mythology would be the veiled expression of a rational truth. But if mythology’s intentions are really this irreligious, how could it possibly inspire so much religious zeal? Even Schopenhauer recognizes the religious zeal in those religions, such as Graeco-Roman paganism, that have little pessimism at their foundation (*PP2*, 384–85). Moreover, why would a philosophy make use of transcendent beings in its allegorical representation of philosophical truth? Would it not be far easier, and give less cause for abuse, if a more or less naturalistic worldview were professed in mythology? This is not the case, which already makes the allegorical interpretation problematic.

To this assertion, Schopenhauer might reply that the fantasy of human beings easily takes flight. A whole host of religions actually get a number of things plain wrong and attempt to sate the metaphysical need by means of trite optimism. Schopenhauer suggests then to counter this problem by advocating that those religions that “oppose the progress of humanity in cognizance of the truth . . . must be considerably pushed to one side” (*WWV2*, 185). This would mean that belief in supernatural entities is a part of religion that is best forgotten (which is another reason why Schopenhauer preferred Buddhism over Hinduism). He is then particularly harsh on Greek and Roman mythology, which is “merely a game of the imagination and an invention of poets using folk fairy tales” (*PP2*, 385). Schopenhauer seems aware that myth is not invented by poets, but he fails to recognize that these “folk fairy tales” have a truth value beyond the allegorical. What is more, if Schopenhauer were to dismiss all mythology with one broad stroke, this would go counter to his assertions, quoted at the beginning of this section, that older religions tended more forcibly toward truth. When one advances further into the origins of mythology, one finds a plethora of actual, religious belief in transcendent beings.

A second argument that Schelling advances against the allegorical point of view is that this implies that the authors of mythology were “a people freed

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of this kind. The proponents of this theory that Schelling identifies are the Greek philosopher Euhemerus, Francis Bacon, the philologist Christian Gottlob Heyne, and his successor Gottfried Hermann. These authors developed very complex and intricate theories that allow mythology to blend smoothly with morality, philosophy, or natural science. In the end, Schelling simply points out (addressing Hermann in particular) that some of this “so exceeds all plausibility that we gladly refrain from following the esteemed author in the further course of his explanation” (*HCM*, 42).

by the philosophers from an already present religious superstition" (*HCM*, 40). Accordingly, for the allegorical interpretation to work, philosophy has to be logically prior to mythology or would have at least emerged simultaneously with mythology. These authors then had the noble intention to educate the masses through stories and parables, but Schelling somewhat cynically adds, "the intentions failed, as the inventors indeed present their teaching to the people, but inexplicably neglect—vis-à-vis a people already full of ideas about invisible beings standing behind natural phenomenon—to offer beforehand an explanation of the merely grammatically intended personifications: so that in the end the people are left to their own devices to find the true meaning; or, misunderstanding it, only *to deceive themselves*" (*HCM*, 41–42). The authors of mythology would have been utterly unsuccessful in their pursuit, which inclines toward the point of view that the intention behind mythology was drastically different than what the allegorical interpretation purports it to be. Instead, the potential allegorical meaning of religion was added later on, or might even have served to reshape and rationalize mythology to be a better fit with this alleged allegorical message.

Schelling notes that a mythic, dark consciousness where mythology was lived rather than understood must necessarily precede mythology and philosophy. Even in mythology, there is already introduced a distance between that original consciousness by introducing logos in the mythos. But the actual origin, or what Schelling calls, the "dark foundry" (*HCM*, 17) of mythology lies beyond all philosophy: "Just as little as poetry did philosophy precede mythology" (*HCM*, 46). In fact, Schopenhauer himself notes how religion and mythology seem to have preceded philosophy everywhere: "Whereas religion everywhere gained a head-start on philosophy" (*PP2*, 355).<sup>16</sup> Philosophy is therefore not the origin of mythology, but rather one potential exit from mythic consciousness, the poetic being a different one: "The two poets Homer and Hesiod, so very different from each other . . . designated the *two* equally possible—not *beginnings* but—*exits* from mythology" (*HCM*, 46).

#### IV. SCHELLING'S ALTERNATIVE EXPLICATION AND POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY

Schelling provides an alternative explication of the origin of mythology. Thus far, we have seen how Schelling opposes the point of view that mythology is a pure fabrication (the poetic view) or that it is a philosophy/science in disguise (the allegorical view). His own view must then necessarily navi-

<sup>16</sup> Given his understanding of the metaphysical need, Schopenhauer seems committed to the view that philosophy and religion arise simultaneously. This does seem factually wrong, which he recognizes in *PP2*. This statement could then read that Schopenhauer believes that religion is more popular and accessible than philosophy (I thank Jonathan Head for pointing this out). Given the context of this quote, I think this interpretation indeed charitable, but somewhat unlikely.



gate between viewing religion as either intentionally espousing philosophical truth or as a mere fabrication to satisfy the artistic drive. In his view then, mythology becomes an instinctive creation that responds to the inward revelation of transcendence (this will be unpacked below). In his own words, mythology is “the product of an unintentional-intentional, instinctive invention, which on the one hand would hold at a distance from itself everything merely fabricated and artificial, but on the other hand would at the same time allow that the deepest meaning and the soundest relations inherent in mythology be seen as not merely contingent” (*HCM*, 53). Mythology must then be an extension of human nature but not of the rational parts of that nature. This makes mythology true in itself because it gives expression to something real that is not rational, which is what he means by “tautegorical.” Religion (mythology and revelation) becomes for Schelling an aspect of a positive philosophy, of which the insights cannot be expressed using rational concepts.<sup>17</sup> To understand this point of view, a detour is necessary by what he calls his “positive philosophy.”

Schelling delivered his lectures in Berlin on “The Grounding of Positive Philosophy” (1842) around the same time he delivered the lectures on the “Historical-Critical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mythology” (1842)—he would continue to lecture on the actual “Philosophy of Mythology” until 1851. Here, Schelling expresses the point of view, anticipating Heidegger’s critique of the ontotheological tradition, that modern philosophy has focused almost exclusively—with a few noteworthy moments of the “positive” breaking through—on negative philosophy. Schelling defines negative philosophy as a ‘science of reason’, which details the relationship of concepts to each other and is generated by subjective consciousness (he is mainly thinking of Fichte here). Schelling himself might be complicit in this negative philosophy by initially joining Fichte in trying to systematize transcendental philosophy in his “System of Transcendental Idealism” (1800).

Traditional philosophy, in Schelling’s view, recognized three sources of knowledge, namely, understanding, or *Verstand* (*GPP*, 35–36); experience (*GPP*, 36–37); and reason, or *Vernunft* (*GPP*, 37–38). The latter was instrumental for metaphysics, which is the science of the “absolute supersensible” (*GPP*, 37). The faculty of reason applied the concepts of the understanding to experience so as to provide knowledge of that which exceeds experience: “The former metaphysics was based on the assumption that it is capable, through the application of general concepts and fundamental principles to what was provided in experience, of inferring that which is beyond experience” (*GPP*, 38). This way of doing metaphysics collapsed (Kant), and as a

<sup>17</sup> For a more comprehensive survey of how Schelling believes that philosophy extends itself to religion in a nondogmatic fashion, see Albert Franz, *Philosophische Religion: Eine Auseinandersetzung mit den Grundlegungsproblemen der Spätphilosophie F.W.J. Schellings* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1992), 85–93.

result the human mind found itself in a dilemma: "Either [the human mind] must abandon metaphysics altogether, that is, all knowledge of that which lies outside and beyond experience, or must search for another way to arrive at it" (*GPP*, 42).

After Kant, philosophers have attempted to bring back all sources of knowledge to one absolute *prius*; namely, the I of absolute consciousness as the "common *prius* of sensibility, of the understanding, and of reason" (*GPP*, 55). This turned philosophy into an "unconditioned *science of reason*" (*GPP*, 57). But this science of reason is only concerned with the essence or conceptual nature of things, and not with their being or their existence. Negative philosophy reduces the being of things to their essence. From this type of negative, conceptual thinking, there can be no bridge toward being as such. This is illustrated well by Kant's critique of the ontological argument. According to Kant, the ontological argument expresses the relationship between certain concepts; namely, between the concepts of perfection, necessary existence, and God. When the concept of necessary existence is subsumed under the concept perfection, the being to which perfection is ascribed must then also be in possession of the predicate of necessary existence. But this inference merely shows that God, if he exists, must necessarily exist. Thought cannot assign existence by merely conceptual logic because "being is obviously not a real predicate, i.e., a concept of something that could add to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing or of certain determinations in themselves."<sup>18</sup>

Anything real must necessarily derive from experience (of whatever kind), which is a point of view shared by Kant, Schelling, and Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer repeatedly states that "a true philosophy cannot be spun out of mere abstract concepts, but instead must be grounded on observation and experience, inner as well as outer. . . . Philosophy must have its source in the intuitive apprehension of the world" (*PP2*, 9). Here, Schelling and Schopenhauer accept the direct, inward revelation of the transcendent. In the second part of the first volume of his *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer claims that human beings are intimately aware of the essence of their own bodies. We directly experience our bodies as "will," without having to make a representation of that body. We have therefore an "awareness" or even "cognition" that is not based on concepts, representations, or even logic. A similar thing happens in Schopenhauer's aesthetics, to which we will return at the close of this essay. Schelling will illustrate this issue by means of what he calls "metaphysical empiricism."

The main difficulty with a merely negative philosophy—especially when it purports to be positive philosophy such as with Hegel which is a "negative [philosophy] driven beyond its limits" (*GPP*, 80)—is that it cannot bridge

<sup>18</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 567.



toward actual existence, or what Schelling calls Being or God. Schopenhauer makes a very similar claim. Ordinary thought is structured in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason. This principle roughly coincides with what subjective consciousness adds to intuition in Kant's philosophy: time, space, causality, logic, and motivation. Most systems of thought that describe reality are equally governed by this principle, such as mathematics, dogmatic philosophy, and natural science (WWVI, 113–18). Accordingly, these systems of thought can at best describe representational reality, not reality in itself. The latter must, according to Schopenhauer, be totally (*toto genere*) different from the former. Reality in itself is the ground from which representational reality emerges and can therefore not be governed by the principles of representational reality. In order to amount to reality in itself, one must find an awareness that is not conditioned by the principle of sufficient reason. In Schopenhauer's philosophy, this is achieved by introspection, a lesson he learned from Kant: "You could also say that Kant's doctrine makes us realize that we need not look beyond ourselves for the beginning and the end of the world, but rather within" (WWVI, 498).

The similarities with Schelling's argument are uncanny. What Schopenhauer will eventually call "will" as the in-itself of reality (which is merely endless activity or self-expression), is called "Being" (*Seyn*) by Schelling. In 1809, Schelling would however use "will" and "Being" interchangeably: "In the final and highest instance there is no other Being than Will. Will is primordial Being, and all predicates apply to it alone—groundless, eternity, independence of time, self-affirmation!" (HF, 350). Schopenhauer did carefully study Schelling's *Freedom-Essay*, but similar thoughts on will can already be found in other thinkers such as Kant. Schelling would argue, like Schopenhauer, that Being cannot be the end result of philosophy, that is, concepts cannot navigate toward Being, but this must necessarily be the starting point of true philosophy. Positive philosophy, which deals with freedom and Being, must necessarily precede negative philosophy. This also implies that the positive—God, will, or Being—cannot be captured by means of the tools of negative philosophy, which is "reason" or the "absolute prius of consciousness." If Being necessarily precedes the system of conceptual thought, then it must necessarily precede the principles of conceptual thought. This means that a priori, conceptual thought has something like a conceptual past that perennially looms over its claims and limits their validity to the present. The past is then that which precedes logical thought; logos itself has an origin beyond and before itself. This dark origin has to be revealed to philosophy and can never be taken up by negative philosophy.

There is thus a dimension to our investigation of reality that upsets any panlogicism or pansubjectivism. Any philosophical system that purports to be without this dimension often finds itself at a loss at decisive points: "But the extralogical nature of existence rebels so decisively against this that even those who, consistent with their concepts, explain the world and even

their own existence as the mere logical consequence of some kind of original necessity do not have the words they want and must rather, forsaking the standpoint of pure thought, reach for expressions that are entirely unsuitable, and indeed impossible, from their standpoint" (*GPP*, 95). A complete philosophy requires both "a science that grasps the essence of things and the content of all being and a science that explains the actual existence of things" (*ibid.*). Thus, Schelling does not dismiss negative philosophy but limits its claims and validity to one aspect of reality by making way for a science that precedes negative philosophy. Schelling notes that in some ancient philosophers this insight came to fruition in their recourse to mythology. For instance, Plato turned in the *Timaeus* to a mythic story for an account of the creation of the world (*GPP*, 96–101). Plato had a healthy appreciation for how true philosophy required a dimension that must appear like madness or mania from the perspective of conceptual thought: "The best things we have come from madness."<sup>19</sup> In his unpublished "The Ages of the World" (the version of 1815), Schelling concurs with this point of view when claiming that "nothing great can be accomplished without a constant solicitation of madness, which should always be overcome, but should never be utterly lacking" (*AW*, 338). Madness can be the result of the direct, inward exposure to the immediate revelation of Being or God—not all senses of madness are as such though. Schopenhauer similarly found that the "genius" (creator of art) often appears as "mad" to normal people (*WWVI*, 219–21)—he would even visit asylums, such as the Berlin Charité, in order to acquaint himself better with madness.

#### V. SCHELLING'S TAUTEGORICAL EXPLICATION OF MYTHOLOGY

When one remains stuck in merely negative philosophy, one is forced to choose between the poetic and the philosophical view of mythology. Such a frame of reference forces philosophical thought to be enclosed upon itself so that every part of it neatly interrelates with every other: either mythology is philosophical truth or it is nonsense. While Schopenhauer is remarkably close to Schelling when it comes to most matters of metaphysics and epistemology, he does seem to hold a "negative" perspective on the function of religion. In his view, religion provides the possibility for systematically enclosing thought upon itself: "The metaphysical need of mankind absolutely requires gratification, because the horizon of our thoughts must be closed" (*PP2*, 355). Schelling recognized a hint of self-enclosure in the negative project of a purely systematic philosophy and as long as thought is unable to move beyond this perspective, it will know nothing of actual Being which informs and enables thought: "Pure thought, in which everything develops of

<sup>19</sup> Plato, "Phaedrus," in *Plato: Complete Works*, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff and ed. John Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 522.



necessity, knows nothing of a decision, of an act, or even of a deed" (*GPP*, 173). By decision, act, or deed, Schelling means something that allows pure thought to be. In the next section, we will show that this is not as removed from Schopenhauer as appearances would suggest.

Schelling subscribes to something he slightly misleadingly calls "metaphysical empiricism" (*GPP*, 171–92). This means, quite literally, that the metaphysical manifests itself empirically. It does not do this by a process governed by rational laws (Hegel) or causal logic. The latter mistake was made by Franz Baader's theosophy because it involves God in the emergence of things "as an *actual* chain of events . . . positive philosophy consists precisely in that it rejects all processes in *this sense*, namely in which God would not only be the logical but also the actual result of a process" (*GPP*, 121). One cannot implicate God in a deductive or inferential process, which implies that for Schelling the proof of God lies not in logic or particular experience, but "in all of experience" (*GPP*, 131). Schelling means by this that a comprehensive account of all of experience, not just the sum total of rational thought but also its irrational, extralogical aspects, provides an indication of the nature of absolute being, which Schelling sometimes but not always calls God. This further implies that philosophy will never be able to determinatively prove God, but will always strive to this with the extralogical as a powerful signpost and a necessary companion on that voyage: "This entire philosophy is, therefore, an always advancing knowledge, always nothing other than a philo-sophia, never rigid or stagnant" (*GPP*, 132).

Mythology has an important part to play in this voyage of philosophy. Mythology is positive philosophy, that is, it is able to shed some light on the dark, mythic origin of rational thought. In that capacity, mythology is able to give expression to certain insights which cannot properly or at least initially be expressed conceptually. Schelling draws a number of interesting insights from his engagement with mythology that he could not deduce from conceptual thought. In the "Philosophy of Mythology" lectures, Schelling understands mythology as the way that humanity had sought to understand how reality flowed from transcendence. A (very) brief overview of Schelling's account of this proceeds as follows. According to this doctrine of the potencies (*Potenzenlehre*), there are three potencies: the sheer potency of being, being without limit, and particular being. In *Philosophy of Mythology*, Schelling shows how three world mythologies (Greek, Indian, and Egyptian) all proceed through similar stages in their development where they work through these three different potencies. At first, there is a sense of pantheism of pure mythic consciousness that realizes no distinction between the sacred and the mundane. The overpowering weight of such mythic consciousness is contested by the first potency, which is represented as a male, supreme power (Uranos) that is overthrown or weakened by a female deity (Urania) and finally a young deity arises to reconcile finite being to infinite being (Dionysus). The importance of Schelling's view of mythology obviously does not lie in his

discussion of different world religions (which is highly contestable) but in the fact that he provides compelling evidence that mythology does not belong to science or philosophy. In fact, myth is an irreducible aspect of human consciousness.<sup>20</sup>

Mythic consciousness then necessarily arose as a lived encounter with Being. Throughout its development, humanity has lost that intimate connection to God in mythic consciousness. In Schelling's view, this occurred because different peoples used different languages to denote Being. This means two things: language has distanced us from Being and different languages obscure the fact that all names for Being (Uranus, Gaia, Zeus, God, etc.) denote the very same thing. Humanity has thus moved from an absolute monotheism where myth is lived, to a relative monotheism where there are potentially other gods, to a relative or actual polytheism. Ultimately, through revelation, humanity can move up to an authentic, free sense of monotheism once again.

At this point, we are enabled to provide a comprehensive account of Schelling's view of mythology and religion. These emerge in response to the inward revelation of Being, which cannot properly be communicated by means of conceptual thought. This revelation must then be absolutely free from any possible constraints. For Kant, "absolute freedom" as utter lawlessness "would be an absurdity";<sup>21</sup> strangely enough, Schelling agrees but he allows for the absurd—as that which philosophy cannot convey—to find expression in mythology. Schelling can then be read as arguing for religion to be a perennial companion of human nature, because it gives expression to the proto-rational aspects of the inward revelation of God.

### VI. RETURNING TO SCHOPENHAUER: A WHISPER FROM BEYOND?

Does Schelling's tautegorical account of mythology supersede Schopenhauer's allegorical interpretation of religion? A reading of Schopenhauer's account of artistic creation and intuitive openness to a voice from the beyond actually draws Schopenhauer remarkably close to Schelling's account. First, we will investigate whether Schelling's arguments against the allegorical interpretation hold for Schopenhauer and, second, we will use Schopenhauer's aesthetics to draw him closer to Schelling's theory.

According to Schelling's account of the allegorical interpretation of religion, religion and mythology would be philosopher's invention of a symbolic

<sup>20</sup> For a more detailed exegesis of the specifics of Schelling's philosophy of mythology, see Louis Dupré, "The Role of Mythology in Schelling's Late Philosophy," *Journal of Religion* 87 (2007): 1–20; Edward Allen Beach, *The Potencies of God(s): Schelling's Philosophy of Mythologie* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1994).

<sup>21</sup> Immanuel Kant, "Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals," in *Practical Philosophy: The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, trans. and ed. Mary J. Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 94.



narrative that through allegories conveys philosophical truth. Schopenhauer consistently remains ambiguous with regard to who can be named as the actual author of a particular religion. While religions respond to a typically human, metaphysical need, they do not emerge out of the mind of a particular individual. What we do know is that any individual incapable of philosophical learning tends to adopt an already present religion to satisfy the metaphysical need. While religions would then have to emerge at some point out of the mind of some (group of) individual(s), they do not arise out of the mind of every individual. Who or what creates religion? At this point, it should be clear that for Schopenhauer (good) philosophers do not create religion; Schopenhauer does allow for a philosophy to function as a religion, but this would necessarily be a bad philosophy as well as a bad religion (e.g., Hegel). Schopenhauer is adamant that philosophers create philosophy and that this philosophy should give any and all religion a wide berth: "To demand that even a great mind—a Shakespeare, a Goethe—should *implicite bona fide et sensu proprio* adopt the dogmas of some religion as his conviction is like demanding that a giant put on the shoes of a dwarf" (WWV2, 185–86).

If philosophy proper is not the author of a religion, then this already puts some distance between Schopenhauer's view of religion and Schelling's interpretation of the allegorical approach. What increases such distance is the fact that according to the latter, in the allegorical interpretation, religion becomes about an immanent truth such as natural history or morality, and has little to do with gods—above, this was described as the purpose of mythology being more atheistic than theistic. In different terms, the allegorical interpretation would relate the truth of religion to a truth within the confines of negative, conceptual philosophy. For Schopenhauer, this would mean that religion divulges something truthful about representational or immanent reality. In fact, Schopenhauer allows religion to indirectly convey a truth of a metaphysical nature (pessimism), namely, about something that shimmers through representational reality but decisively belongs to a different realm. The truth in religion is for Schopenhauer nonrepresentational, which means that it is not based upon conceptual thought. Conceptual thought de-fines (limits) objects in opposition to one another, while non-representational insight pierces through the principle of individuation into the realm of metaphysical insight. The allegorical interpretation of mythology that was attacked by Schelling often relegated religious truth to scientific or moral truths. Religion does not do this, according to Schopenhauer. It might induce moral behavior, but it does so by teaching a profound metaphysical message.

All of this seems to allow Schopenhauer's interpretation of religion to get rather close to Schelling's point of view. What does, once again, put some distance between Schopenhauer and Schelling is that Schopenhauer allows for the truth in religion to beget philosophical expression (a nonconceptual philosophy, though), while Schelling fears that philosophy in its negative

character is barren to express this. In other words, for Schelling there is more in revelation than that which can be found already in reason: "If revelation contained nothing more than what is in reason, then it would have absolutely no interest; its sole interest can only consist in the fact that it contains something that exceeds reason, something that is more than what reason contains" (*GPP*, 142–43).

In the Schopenhauerian approach, the author of religion is more properly an artist dealing with matters transcending representation than a dogmatic philosopher dealing with concepts. In fact, Schopenhauer hints to this when he assigns the generation of mythology to the "playful drive of the Greeks to personify everything" (*PP2*, 434–35). While religion might often have served a rather different purpose than art, the emergence of good religion happens in a way not dissimilar to the emergence of art—at least in Schopenhauer's account of the subject. The work of art emerges, according to Schopenhauer, out of the mind of a genius because of his ability to persevere in the pure intuition of the (Platonic) idea that is creatively imagined from worldly inspiration. Of particular importance is the fact that the genius must be brought into a state of inspiration, rather than pursuing artistic creation itself. This means to "stop considering the Where, When, Why and Wherefore of things but simply and exclusively consider the *What* [which is] a peaceful contemplation of the natural object that is directly present [and] we *lose* ourselves in the object completely" (*WWVI*, 210). By the "what" of an object, Schopenhauer refers to the (Platonic) idea which is "the most *adequate objecthood* of the will" (*WWVI*, 206); in other words, the idea is that which lies behind representation as an intermediary between representational and ultimate reality. This means that the artist is directly aware of something that inwardly reveals itself to him in a moment of rapturous inspiration to which he responds with the creation of a piece of art. In the piece of art, the artist is not speaking himself but simply echoing in a more determinate form a whisper he picked up from the beyond. This also explains why Schopenhauer describes the genius primarily as someone possessing surplus sensitivity, rather than knowledge: "Sensibility, objectified in the nerves, is the principal characteristic of humans and is actually that which is human in humans . . . if it is excessively predominant, it yields genius. Therefore the human being of genius is human to a higher degree";<sup>22</sup> "Genius is conditioned by an excess of nervous force and hence of sensibility" (*PPI*, 326).

Schelling's way of understanding the emergence of religion and mythology is highly similar to Schopenhauer's interpretation of artful creation: the human mind is passively overtaken by a real presence from outside and projects this abundance in a determinate system. Schelling described this pro-

<sup>22</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, "On the Will in Nature," in *Schopenhauer on the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason and Other Writings*, trans. and ed. David Cartwright, Edward Erdmann, and Christopher Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 31–32.



cess as “unintentional-intentional, instinctive invention” (*HCM*, 53), words that resonate with Schopenhauer’s description of the artist’s zeal: “The unpremeditated, unintentional, indeed partly unconscious and instinctive dimension that we have observed form the beginning in works of the *genius* is simply the result of the fact that primal artistic cognition is totally separate and independent of the will, a will-free and will-less cognition” (*PP2*, 446). Both Schelling and Schopenhauer would agree that the emergence of respectively mythology and art has nothing to do with the traditional idea of understanding the world, but with metaphysical insight—either the unity of reality (Schopenhauer) or the progressive self-manifestation of God (Schelling)—being inwardly revealed, of which religion and art are the expressions. So Schelling emphasises that the monotheism that is the necessary end result of the mythological process is not of “the human *understanding*, but rather of human *nature*” (*HCM*, 185).

If Schopenhauer would agree that religion is more alike to aesthetic creation than philosophical invention, then it becomes clear that his own allegorical view of truth in religion shares little with the allegorical view attacked by Schelling. If the process of conceiving religion resembles the intuitive and instinctive inspiration of the genius artist, then Schopenhauer’s account closely resembles Schelling’s view of the emergence of mythology. This means that both the atheist Schopenhauer and the Christian Romantic Schelling believed that religion derived from a similar human characteristic of giving expression to some sort of revelation of a transcendent truth. Schopenhauer perhaps remained somewhat naively optimistic that this truth could find more potent and direct expression in philosophical argument, while Schelling recognized that philosophical concepts are poor compared to the rich poetics of religion.

### VII. CONCLUSION

The dominant tone in the nineteenth century on the relationship of religion to philosophy was that religion, at its best, was an honest attempt at philosophy but was unable to spiritualize to the extent of dialectical philosophy. For some, this meant that religion could be an assistant to (practical) philosophy (Kant), but for others this meant that religion was for all intents and purposes a stage humanity has or should have passed (Hegel, Comte). While Schopenhauer generally fits neatly with a certain direction of post-Kantianism, he does attempt to allocate a different purpose to religion. What is more, religion is able to accomplish certain feats that philosophy cannot achieve, such as cajoling the masses into a proper ethical state of mind. At first appearances, the later Schelling develops a wildly different theory: mythology and religion attune us to an extralogical dimension of reality that would be missed by any philosophy that develops from concepts alone. This essay had as its goal to explore the purpose attributed to religion and mythology in the thought of

Schopenhauer and the later Schelling. While Schelling clearly opposes an allegorical interpretation of religious truth, his own view of positive philosophy draws close to an aesthetical reinterpretation of Schopenhauer's report with regard to religion. Schopenhauer and Schelling both realize that religion and mythology emerge because of the ambiguous whispers from beyond conceptual reality that attempts to convey a profound truth preceding and prefiguring that reality. Obviously, the specific truth they feel is conveyed in religion differs remarkably.

This ultimately shows that Schopenhauer and Schelling were close to being of the same mind when discussing religion. While Schelling would exert significantly more influence on theology and philosophy in the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Schopenhauer equally has something to teach. To single out one thing: the fact that human beings are intuitively aware of something transcending reality does not mean that this something is a benevolent divine or a rationally ordered harmonious cosmic whole. There is, in a sense, a creator of the world, but this does not guarantee that this creator is good.



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# “Traditional Orthodoxy” as a Postcolonial Movement\*

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Scholarship has long since demonstrated that colonialism does more than exploit a community materially. In colonial and postcolonial settings, indigenous populations lose control of what it means to be; they are challenged by what it means to exist in a world dictated by an alien discourse. In such a setting, through complicated and overlapping responses of acquiescence, assimilation, and resistance, boundaries are renegotiated and ethical prioritizations transform. In a postcolonial setting, the naming of self and the naming of the good are recalibrated to account for the shadow of the former master. The postcolonial narration of self and other is an innovative, hybrid narration because it is defined by a shadow that once was not but now is. In such a setting, responses are disparate, with each voice longing in its own way for a return to the before. But there is no return. Polyphonic cries, some pointing back, some forward, many in multiple directions, splinter the community and the trauma of colonialism re-cycles seemingly forever.

This article argues that a phenomenon of modern Orthodox Christianity—the rise of “traditional Orthodoxy” as a category of self-definition—is best understood as a postcolonial movement.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, it argues that the emergence of traditional Orthodoxy as a distinctive and constitutive marker of communal identity, one that sets its adherents apart ideologically,

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<sup>1</sup> Maria Todorova and Milica Bakic-Hayden offer some of the most important early efforts to apply the resources of postcolonial critique to historically Orthodox communities and emphasize the “discourse” of Balkanism in Western European culture and scholarship. See, esp., Maria Todorova, “The Balkans: From Discovery to Invention,” *Slavic Review* 53 (1994): 453–82, and *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Milica Bakic-Hayden, “Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia,” *Slavic Review* 54 (1995): 917–31. See also Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994); and Sally Henderson, “The Elephant in the Room: Orientalism and Russian Studies,” *Slovo* 19 (2007): 125–35. Of more recent note, see Christopher D. L. Johnson, “‘He Has Made the Dry Bones Live’: Orientalism’s Attempted Resuscitation of Eastern Christianity,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 82 (2014): 1–30.

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morally, and (sometimes) sacramentally from a broader Orthodox Christian communion, should be understood as the by-product of an inner-community struggle for meaning and relevance in a the wake of centuries of theological and cultural captivity.<sup>2</sup> While the slogans “traditional” and “traditionalist” Orthodoxy were first created by fringe groups who resisted a modernization of the liturgical calendar, the catchphrases have more recently been co-opted by a broader, more loosely organized but similarly aimed subgroup within the Orthodox Church whose animating spirit is resistance to the perceived threats of a Western and/or modern contamination of Orthodox teaching and practice.

### LATINS, OTTOMANS, AND COLONIAL ORTHODOXY

While some scholars continue to question the legitimacy of applying the category of colonialism to medieval societies,<sup>3</sup> Byzantinists are increasingly describing the impact of the Fourth Crusade and the subsequent Frankish and Venetian settlements in Greece and the Aegean as one of colonization.<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this article, we do not need to define the medieval Western occupation of Byzantium as a colonial encounter per se, so much as establish that Eastern Christianity began a complicated cultural and religious dependency on Latin Christianity during the era of the Crusades and that this dependency developed into an even deeper intellectual entanglement with and subservience to the West during the Ottoman period.<sup>5</sup> Even before the Crusaders seized Constantinople and established

<sup>2</sup> To be clear, I am not proposing that religious communities, such as Orthodox Christianity, are colonized independently of political and commercial enterprises. Rather, my goal is to draw upon the resources of postcolonial critique to help us to understand internal fractures within the Orthodox community that coincided with a series of political and cultural captivities of Orthodox populations.

<sup>3</sup> To be sure, there are several factors that distinguish the Byzantine/Crusader encounter from that of the modern tri-continental experience. Perhaps the most important difference is that the Byzantines and the Crusaders shared a common Greco-Roman and Christian inheritance, even if they had appropriated those traditions distinctively. Among the more notable challengers to the use of “colonial” categories for premodern societies, see Robert Young, *Postcolonialism: A Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), esp. 15–24.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Averil Cameron, *Byzantine Matters* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); and Anthony Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium: The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Joshua Prawer was the first scholar of the Crusades to describe the endeavor as one of colonialism. See his *The Crusaders' Kingdom: European Colonialism in the Middle Ages* (New York: Praeger, 1972). While several of his assumptions have since been challenged, scholars have fruitfully applied the resources of postcolonial critique to the European/Middle Eastern engagement. See, esp., Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> John McGuckin is one of the very few scholars to employ the resources of postcolonial critique to assess the ways in which the legacy of colonialism (both political and intellectual) has framed the Orthodox view of itself. See his “Orthodoxy and Western Christianity: The Original European Culture War?,” in *Orthodoxy and Western Culture: A Collection of Essays Hon-*



the so-called Latin Empire of Byzantium in 1204, the Byzantines had come to rely on Western European military and mercantile assistance. It is one of the great paradoxes of Christian history that while Greek and Latin Christianity would enter into formal schism in this same period (a development certainly exacerbated by the Crusades), the unprecedented engagement of Christian East and West enabled by Frankish settlement in Byzantium also led to the first Greek appropriations of Latin theological ideas and methods.<sup>6</sup> What is more, as Byzantine political fortunes went into steep decline after 1204, so too did the confidence of Greek theological superiority vis-à-vis Latin Christianity. Even those late-medieval Greek Christians like Gennadios Scholarios (the first Patriarch of Constantinople under the Ottomans) who opposed reunion with Western Christianity declared that Latin theological training and analysis was superior to that possessed by the Greeks.<sup>7</sup>

The ambivalence of Eastern Christianity’s dependence on/resistance to the Western other did not cease with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. If anything, it increased in both scope and complexity. For example, because the Ottomans largely forbade Christian printing, the majority of Orthodox theological and liturgical printing took place in Italian print shops. And because the Ottomans stymied Christian theological education, the majority of Orthodox clerics from the Ottoman zone who received formal training did so as resident aliens in Western seminaries in Padua, Pisa, Florence, Halle, Paris, and Oxford.<sup>8</sup> In 1576, Pope Gregory XIII founded the College of St. Athanasius for the explicit purpose of training Greek stu-

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oring Jaroslav Pelikan on his 80th Birthday, ed. Valerie Hotchkiss and Patrick Henry (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2005), 85–108.

<sup>6</sup> For example, the first translation of Augustine into Greek occurred in the latter part of the thirteenth century and was explicitly commissioned by the Byzantine emperor Michael VII Palaiologos in an effort to bridge the Latin/Greek theological divide. On this topic, see Elizabeth Fisher, “Planoudes’ *De Trinitate*, the Art of Translation, and the Beholder’s Share,” in *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*, ed. George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2008), 41–62. The same period witnessed a remarkable appropriation and critical reflection on the thought of Thomas Aquinas. See Markus Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Matthew Briel, “A Greek Thomist: Providence in Gennadios Scholarios” (PhD diss., Fordham University, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> Gennadios Scholarios, *Œuvres complètes de Georges Scholarios*, vols. 1–8, ed. Martin Jungie, Louis Petit, and X. A. Siderides (Paris: Bonne Press, 1928–1935), esp. vol. 4, 403–10, 495–96; vol. 6, 179–80. See also Marie-Hélène Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400–vers 1472): Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparation de l’empire Byzantin* (Paris: Institut Français d’Études Byzantines, 2008), esp. 345–48.

<sup>8</sup> See M.-J. le Guillou, “Aux sources des mouvements spirituelles de l’Église orthodoxe de Grèce: I. La renaissance spirituelle du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *Istina* 1 (1960): 95–128. See also Kallistos Ware, *Eustratios Argenti: A Study of the Greek Church under Turkish Rule* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1964), 5–16. The lone Greek academy outside of the Ottoman Empire was the Flanginian School that operated in Venice from 1665 to 1905 but this served as a general educational school rather than a seminary.

dents.<sup>9</sup> While some Greeks were deeply suspicious of such endeavors, there is little doubt that theological education under the Ottomans was a perennial problem. As a result, several Greek bishops, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, invited Latin missionaries to preach to their flocks and even hear confessions.<sup>10</sup>

As a consequence of this dependence on Western Christianity, Orthodox theological education, both in Ottoman territory and even in Russia (albeit for different reasons), came to resemble its Western counterpart in unprecedented ways.<sup>11</sup> Whether inside the Ottoman zone or outside of it, Orthodox theological reflection underwent what Georges Florovsky called a *pseudomorphosis* by appropriating the categories, terminology, and method of argumentation then current in Western theological discourse.<sup>12</sup> Rather than a creative, stimulating encounter between Latin and Orthodox ideas, for Florovsky, this was a captivity of the soul of the church, a “malignant schism” between theological thought and historical practice.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps the single greatest example of this Eastern Christian reliance on Western Christian theological ideas and methods was the wide-scale adoption of “manual theology” as it had been developed in the Roman Catholic world from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century.<sup>14</sup>

Not surprisingly, as the Orthodox Church grew increasingly dependent upon the West, so too did opposition to Latin Christianity increase in certain

<sup>9</sup> The eighteenth-century polemicist Eustratios Argenti claimed that the sole purpose of the College of St. Athanasius was to lure unsuspecting Orthodox students who came to the West to study and, in turn, transform them into “Papists” who would act as secret agents for the Vatican upon their return to the East. Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, 53.

<sup>10</sup> It is worth noting that Roman authorities typically forbid Latin clerics from hearing the confessions of Orthodox Christians. But the practice appears to have been widespread nonetheless. Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, 21–23. Ware notes that this cooperative relationship between Greek bishops and Latin religious began to deteriorate around the turn of the eighteenth century.

<sup>11</sup> Even before the Westernizing reforms of Peter the “Great,” Russian theological education had begun to appropriate models of scholastic education. See Georges Florovsky, “Encounter with the West,” in *Ways of Russian Theology*, vol. 1 (Belmont, MA: Nordland Publishing, 1979), 33–114. For the premier examination of Florovsky’s thought and contribution to modern Orthodoxy, see Paul Gavrilyuk, *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), esp. 158–91.

<sup>12</sup> Florovsky, “Encounter,” 72 and 85. See also J. M. Karmiris, *Ἐπερόδοξοι ἐπιδράσεις ἐπὶ τὰς ὁμολογίας του ἱζ’ αἰῶνος* (Jerusalem, 1949).

<sup>13</sup> Florovsky, “Encounter,” 85.

<sup>14</sup> While it is true that the reliance on Western theological models of religious education did not lead the Orthodox to abandon dogmatic positions that set it in opposition to Roman Catholicism, the appropriation of neoscholastic techniques, such as manual theology, highlight the complicated dependence of the Orthodox on the West. The Romanian theologian, Dumitru Stăniloae was likely the first major Orthodox theologian to reject manual theology. See Lucian Turcescu, ed., *Dumitru Stăniloae: Tradition and Modernity in Theology* (Iasi: Center for Romanian Studies, 2002), 7; and Radu Bordeianu, “(In)Voluntary Ecumenism: Dumitru Stăniloae’s Interaction with the West as Open Sobernicity,” in *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, ed. George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 240–54.



Orthodox circles.<sup>15</sup> In 1484, a mere thirty-one years after the Ottoman capture of Constantinople, a council of bishops forbade the distribution of the sacraments to Latin Christians for the first time in history. Significantly, that council also sought to standardize the practice by which a Latin Christian could become a member of the Orthodox faith—they were to undergo the sacramental rite of chrismation.<sup>16</sup> By the eighteenth century, however, some Orthodox apologists had grown so hostile in their approach to Latin Christianity that they declared Catholic baptism to be wholly ineffective and insisted that converts to Orthodoxy be baptized a second time.<sup>17</sup> This revival of anti-Latin hostility arose from a combination of factors, including Ottoman policy, the deteriorating relationship between Greeks and Venetians in Venetian controlled territory, Roman Catholic missionary activity, and a rising frustration among some Orthodox Christians toward those who were willing to intermingle and co-celebrate with Latins.<sup>18</sup>

Thus, from the eighteenth century until the twentieth, waves of Orthodox activists—notably many of them Western-educated—attempted to purge

<sup>15</sup> There were, of course, several triggers for this. Perhaps most significantly was the rise of aggressive Latin proselytism throughout the Ottoman region and the fact that the Ottomans were quite successful in pitting Greek and Latin Christians against one another. See George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, “Orthodox Naming of the Other: A Postcolonial Approach,” 1–22; and Norman Russell, “From the ‘Shield of Orthodoxy’ to the ‘Tome of Joy’: The Anti-Western Stance of Dositheos II of Jerusalem (1641–1707),” 71–82; both in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*.

<sup>16</sup> The Constantinopolitan Synod of 1484 was a regional council, likely influenced by the Ottomans, which officially repealed the “false” union of East and West achieved at the Council of Florence in 1438. Convened by Patriarch Symeon I, the synod for the first time articulated the precise path that Latin converts to Orthodoxy must pursue (they were to be Chrismated, not rebaptized). While it was only a regional synod, its position became the official position throughout the Orthodox world and remained as such for centuries, even though local practice in areas where Orthodox and Catholics lived in proximity were more receptive to one another. For more on where this council sits within the development of Orthodox opinion on Latin conversion in the Middle Ages, see Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, esp. 64–68; and George Dragas, “The Manner or Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church with Special Reference to the Decisions of the Synods of 1484 (Constantinople), 1755 (Constantinople), and 1667 (Moscow),” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 44 (1999): 235–71.

<sup>17</sup> While hardly straightforward or universally accepted, there had been calls within Orthodox circles for the rebaptism of Latin Christians stretching back centuries. There is a long scholarly literature on the subject, highlighted by Louis Petit, “L’entrée des catholiques dans l’Église orthodoxe,” *Échos d’Orient* 2 (1899): 129–38; Martin Jungie, *Theologia dogmatica christianorum orientalium ab Ecclesia catholica dissidentium*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1926–35), 103–25; Raymond Janin, “La Répatisation des Latins dans les Églises Orthodoxes,” *Annuaire de l’École des législations religieuses* 3 (1952): 59–66; and John Karmires, “Πῶς δεῖ δέχεσθαι τοὺς προσιόντας τῇ Ὀρθοδοξίᾳ,” *θεολογία* 25 (1954): 211–43. For a thorough bibliography up to 1999, see George Dragas, “The Manner of Reception of Roman Catholic Converts into the Orthodox Church,” esp. 254–67. The most thorough study of the eighteenth-century controversy is Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, esp. 65–107.

<sup>18</sup> The evidence of intermarriage and sacramental commingling is extensive. See Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, 18–21.

Orthodox teaching and practice from a Latin captivity.<sup>19</sup> One of the first was Dositheos II, Patriarch of Jerusalem from 1669 to 1707, who composed a series of anti-Latin treatises.<sup>20</sup> Among other things, he identified four “beasts” hostile to the true church: Lutheranism, Calvinism, the Jesuits, and the Gregorian calendar. As we will see, the link between the new calendar and Western heresy became a dominant theme for the traditionalist movements of the twentieth century.<sup>21</sup>

Alongside this intellectual reliance/captivity, Eastern Christians in the Ottoman zone experienced an equally complicated relationship with the political agents of Western colonial power. Under the Ottoman *millet* system, Christians constituted a distinctive ethno-minority that conflated political and religious identity.<sup>22</sup> When successive portions of this minority community achieved political independence from the Ottomans in the nineteenth century, the emergent nation-states of Greece, Serbia, and Romania effectively exchanged one “alien” sovereign for another. Western European colonial figures had played decisive roles in the various Balkan wars of independence, and in the aftermath of those wars they continued to exert considerable political influence in the new nation-states.<sup>23</sup> As just one example of the way that Balkan independence represented a form of proxy colonization by Western European powers, the new kings of Greece and Romania were actually drawn from the royal courts of Germany.<sup>24</sup> And even though a nationalist education, which had a particular Orthodox character, was a central component of the nationalist program, these countries continued to employ the Western patterns of instruction that they had relied upon during the Ottoman period. Indeed, for authors such as Photius Kontoglou, the

<sup>19</sup> Dositheos II of Jerusalem, Patriarch of Jerusalem from 1669–1707, was one of the first such figures. In the eighteenth century, Eustratios Argenti and Patriarch Cyril V of Constantinople developed a series of polemical works attacking various aspects of Roman Catholic teaching, especially the role of the papacy.

<sup>20</sup> See Russell, “From the ‘Shield of Orthodoxy.’”

<sup>21</sup> See Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, 32.

<sup>22</sup> Under the Ottomans, the Orthodox were a nation within a nation, known as the *Rum Millet* (the Roman nation), with distinctively second-class status. They endured higher rates of taxation, were forced to wear distinctive clothing, could not proselytize, and could not forge any political connections with foreign entities. Perhaps even more threatening to the community was the fact that an Ecumenical Patriarch could only be elected with the approval of the sultan. See Ware, *Eustratios Argenti*, 2–5.

<sup>23</sup> For an examination of the role of the Orthodox Church in the emergent nation states in the Balkans and of the extent to which that role was orchestrated by Western European colonial figures, see the illuminating essays in Lucian Leustean, ed., *Orthodox Christianity and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Southeastern Europe* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014). And, for a study of the ways in which Christian minorities within the Ottoman Empire worked with European powers to achieve their independence (often a great expense to themselves), see Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), esp. 35–48.

<sup>24</sup> In both Greece and Romania their German kings were Roman Catholics who did not convert to Orthodoxy even though Orthodox Christianity was declared the official religion of their kingdoms.



“authentic tradition” of Orthodox aesthetics had survived the Ottoman period only to be corrupted by Western influence in the century after the Greek War of Independence.<sup>25</sup>

At roughly the same time that emergent nation-states in the Balkans were turning West in a bid to break free of the Ottomans, a new anti-Western intellectual movement in Russia sought to return the Russian empire to the values and institutions of its early history.<sup>26</sup> Although its adherents came in many stripes and often advanced competing solutions, this Slavophile movement viewed the “Westernization as modernization” programs inaugurated by Peter I and Catherine II as the cause of social and economic unrest within the empire. Particularly problematic in the eyes of the Slavophiles was the full-scale adaptation of Western methods of education, including seminary education.<sup>27</sup> Although Orthodox Christians in Russia had accumulated Western modes of theological education under different historical circumstances than their coreligionists in the Ottoman zone, many Slavophiles saw the current state of religious education in Russia to be a full-scale corruption of the Orthodox theological tradition.<sup>28</sup> The Slavophile movement was a potent force on the Russian intellectual scene in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but it was not uncontested. And it is precisely within this contested intellectual climate that the Russian émigré theologians in Paris in the 1930s and 1940s sought to make sense of an Orthodox theological tradition that simply could not escape the West.

While it is clear that the Orthodox did not suffer colonial exploitation in the same way or to the same degree as those in the tri-continental regions, it is equally clear that Orthodox Christians—whether in the Balkans, Asia Minor, the Near East, Russia, or even in the West—were tethered to Latin Christianity and Western European political forces from the fifteenth until the twentieth century in ways perceived by many to be both oppressive and in need of correction.<sup>29</sup> Thus, at roughly the same time that Roman Catholic authors of the *Nouvelle Théologie* were attempting to purge manual theology and neoscholasticism from their tradition, a handful of influential Orthodox thinkers set out to do the same. In fact, Russian émigré authors in Paris, such as Vladimir Lossky and Georges Florovsky, worked alongside

<sup>25</sup> Photius Kontoglou, “The Orthodox Tradition of Iconography,” in *Fine Arts and Tradition: A Presentation of Kontoglou’s Teaching*, ed. and trans. Constantine Cavarnos (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 2004), 51–68.

<sup>26</sup> For an overview of the Slavophile movement, its ideology, and its impact on politics, religion, and culture, see Laura Englestein, *Slavophile Empire: Imperial Russia’s Illiberal Path* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).

<sup>27</sup> See Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, “Orthodox Naming of the Other,” esp. 12–13.

<sup>28</sup> Vera Shevzov, “The Burdens of Tradition: Orthodox Constructions of the West in Russia (late 19th–20th cc.),” in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, 83–101.

<sup>29</sup> One of the more interesting aspects of this is the way in which the Orthodox entered into Protestant/Catholic theological debates by appropriating the language and categories of one in attacks against the other. The case of “Calvinist” Patriarch, Cyril Loukaris, and his subsequent condemnations is particularly illuminating. See Ware, *Eustrathios Argenti*, 8–16.

their Roman Catholic counterparts in order return their respective traditions to the purity of the patristic sources.<sup>30</sup> But the Orthodox project of liberation by Lossky, Florovsky, and especially their Greek students (e.g., John Romanides and Christos Yannaras) was more ambitious because at one and the same time, these authors were, in part, seeking to release the Orthodox world from a Catholic captivity of imagined Babylonian proportions.<sup>31</sup> As we will see, a parallel project in Orthodox aesthetics sought to cleanse Orthodox art and music from Western influence and return it to its historic Byzantine and Russian idiom.<sup>32</sup> Like postcolonial activists elsewhere, these initiatives of reclamation were both bound and enabled by the discursive horizon that the activists sought to escape. Indeed, it is hard to comprehend this nostalgic promotion of the age of patristic teaching or the emphasis on early Christian history without recourse to then-current Western philosophical trends such as historicism and romanticism.<sup>33</sup>

This act of intellectual and spiritual retrieval, a quest for the before, for all of its emphasis on the ancient church and its traditions, never embraced the category or emphasized the exact expression “traditional Orthodoxy.” That neologism first emerged in a very specific context as part of a targeted propaganda effort to juxtapose and resist the adoption of the “New” calendar in the Church of Greece.

#### THE FIRST TRADITIONALISTS

The combination of the adjective “traditional” with the nouns “Orthodox” (for a community) or “Orthodoxy” (for a set of beliefs) does not seem to occur prior to the late twentieth century.<sup>34</sup> Database searches for the combination produced zero results for patristic, Byzantine, and Ottoman-era texts.<sup>35</sup> Nor does there seem to be any evidence for its cognates in Slavic lit-

<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, authors like Lossky and Florovsky partnered with historically minded Roman Catholics in order to fend off the perceived “modernist” approaches of other Orthodox theologians such as Sergius Bulgakov. On the Orthodox/Roman Catholic parallel project, see Sarah Coakley, “Eastern ‘Mystical Theology’ or Western ‘Nouvelle Théologie’? On the Comparative Reception of Dionysius the Areopagite in Lossky and de Lubac,” in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, 125–41.

<sup>31</sup> See Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, “Orthodox Naming of the Other.”

<sup>32</sup> Léonid Ouspensky was a Russian émigré to Paris in the early twentieth century who, as both theorist and practitioner, led the revival of a Russian iconographic tradition that preceded the influence—corruption, to his mind—of Western expressions of naturalism in religious art. A friend and contemporary of his, Photius Kontoglou, was the Greek iconographer and theologian most responsible for the return of the Byzantine idiom in contemporary Greek Church painting.

<sup>33</sup> It is also rather revealing that the historical project relied so deeply on the resources of Roman Catholic patristic scholarship, such as the *Sources Chrétiennes*.

<sup>34</sup> In ancient and Byzantine Greek *παράδοτος* (-α, -ον) serves as the adjective for “traditional,” with *παράδοσις* serving as the noun for “tradition.”

<sup>35</sup> A proximity search of the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* with a fifteen-word gap between the two terms yielded zero results.

erature.<sup>36</sup> The first consistent adoption of the pairing belongs to a subset of Greek “Old Calendarists,” who coined the phrase in an effort to assert the correctness of their belief in contradistinction to the errors of innovation that they asserted against the broader Orthodox world.

In 1923, at a precarious moment in Balkan-Turkish animosity, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Melitius IV, convened a Pan-Orthodox synod in Constantinople in the hopes of pushing the Orthodox Christian world to join with other Christians in the adoption of the more astronomically accurate Gregorian calendar. With several Orthodox primates absent and unable to gain consensus on the proposal, the synod instead adopted a modified Julian calendar wherein the fixed dates (Christmas, Annunciation, etc.) would align with the Gregorian calendar (moving everything thirteen days earlier), but the calculation for Easter and all of the moveable feasts associated with it (Lent, Ascension, Pentecost, etc.) would continue to follow the Julian calculation. The Synod of 1923 further decided that each of the thirteen self-governing churches (Greece, Serbia, Jerusalem, etc.) could determine for themselves whether or not they would adopt this revised Julian calendar.<sup>37</sup> Most of them did so, with the Church of Bulgaria being the most recent adopter in 1963.<sup>38</sup> As we might expect, there were dissenters within some of the self-governing churches that moved to the modified calendar. In Greece, Cyprus, and Romania especially, small communities opposed to the revised calendar broke sacramental unity with their local church.<sup>39</sup>

Officially separating from the Church of Greece in 1935, the Greek branch of the Old Calendarists first adopted “True Orthodox” as the preferred adjectival self-justification for their sacramental separation from the institutional church. But despite its best rhetorical efforts, the group was marginal, and within a generation it was itself severely fractured.<sup>40</sup> By

<sup>36</sup> Beginning in the 1890s, Berdyaev and other like-minded Russian theologians and historians adopted the phrase “historical Orthodox” as a kind of pejorative critique against a group of school theologians in the Russian Orthodox Church who rejected the idea of doctrinal development and insisted, instead, on the permanent and unchanging nature of Orthodox teaching. My thanks to Paul Gavriluk for pointing me to this development.

<sup>37</sup> Today, there are fourteen self-governing churches in the Orthodox world. In 1923, there were thirteen. The Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia was recognized as an autocephalous church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1998.

<sup>38</sup> The only churches that have not adopted the revised Julian calendar are Jerusalem, Georgia, Serbia, and Russia. The Church of Finland has accepted the Gregorian calendar completely.

<sup>39</sup> It is important to clarify that the autocephalous churches that retained the Julian calendar in its entirety did not recognize the splinter groups within Greece and Cyprus who similarly insisted upon the old calendar. Instead, the Churches of Jerusalem and Russia remained aligned with the Churches of Greece, Cyprus, and Romania, despite the difference of calendar.

<sup>40</sup> The marginal and fractured reality of what survives of the Old Calendar movement was acknowledged by one of the few remaining factions (calling itself The Holy Orthodox Church in North America) in a 1998 book designed to justify its continued existence. “Preface,” in *The Struggle Against Ecumenism: The History of the True Orthodox Church of Greece from 1924 to 1994* (Boston: Holy Orthodox Church of North America, 1998). Although biased in its orientation, this volume offers the best collection of sources about the Old Calendarist movement.



1951, on the heels of the Greek Civil War, the Church of Greece stepped up its own rhetorical pressure and, with assistance of the Greek government, seized, closed, or destroyed several buildings associated with the movement.<sup>41</sup> During the 1950s and 1960s the Greek Old Calendarists underwent further fractures; at one point, one of the larger groups had to turn to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) for an infusion of canonically ordained bishops.<sup>42</sup> Because these groups were suppressed in Greece, many of them established dependent houses in the United States where they could, ironically, take advantage of the West's principles of religious freedom that they often derided in their apologetics.

It is noteworthy that one of the smaller factions of the Old Calendarist movement has had a significant rhetorical impact on the current global Orthodox community. In 1961, Cyprian Koutsoumpas founded the Old Calendarist monastery Saints Cyprian and Justina, in Phyle, Greece. Several years later, that monastery established a dependent house, St. Gregory Palamas, in Hayesville, Ohio, which was later moved to Etna, California. In 1981, just before the Cyprian brotherhood broke with the "True Orthodox Christians of Greece," it established the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies at St. Gregory Palamas monastery.<sup>43</sup> It was this tiny faction that was the first to emphasize the slogan "traditional" and "traditionalist" Orthodoxy (Παραδοσιακή Ορθοδοξία in modern Greek) to distinguish itself from both the broader Orthodox world and ultimately from other Old Calendarist sects. Since its founding, the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies at St. Gregory Palamas has produced a steady stream of pamphlets and short monographs advancing its particular vision of Orthodox teaching.<sup>44</sup> And, in 1984, it started a small periodical, published three times a year, called *Orthodox Tradition*.

#### TRADITION BY NEGATION

From its very inception, there has been a direct link between the Old Calendarist movement's rejection of the ecumenical movement and its resis-

<sup>41</sup> *The Struggle Against Ecumenism*, 71.

<sup>42</sup> With the rise of Communism in Russia, the Russian Church itself splintered between those who tacitly agreed to work with the Kremlin and those who went into self-imposed exile (ROCOR). The latter broke communion with the former. Like the Old Calendarists of Greece, ROCOR was decidedly monarchist and anti-Western in orientation and thus a logical ally for the Old Calendarists, especially in the United States. In the heightened political context of 1960s, the Church of Greece was able to exploit the Old Calendarist–ROCOR alliance as a threat to democracy in Greece.

<sup>43</sup> The "True Orthodox Christians of Greece," as they styled themselves, are also known as the Kallistite Synod, and were one of the larger factions. The Cyprian faction formed its own "Holy Synod in Resistance" in 1986, when the Kallistite Synod rejoined with the "Florinite Synod."

<sup>44</sup> They have also published a great number of English-language lives of the saints.

tance to the revised calendar.<sup>45</sup> That connection was not based in paranoia—when Patriarch Melitius first lobbied the Orthodox world to join the Gregorian calendar in 1920, he explicitly stated his hope that it would lead to Christian unification.<sup>46</sup> As many Old Calendarist apologists have been quick to assert, their concern is not simply a matter of calendar but whether and to what extent the Orthodox Christian world will resist the lure of Western Christianity.<sup>47</sup>

Even before the expression “traditional” and “traditionalist” Orthodoxy emerged as an effective slogan for the anti-ecumenists, a small group of Orthodox writers had begun an apologetical project that juxtaposed the unchangeable character of Orthodox tradition to the ever-changing and godless character of Western culture. One of the most influential was Léonid Ouspensky, who led an effort among the Russian émigrés in Paris to revive the “traditional” style of Russian iconography, purging elements of Western-inspired naturalism that had crept into Russian religious art during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>48</sup> According to Ouspensky, iconography had lost its traditional character and had been infected by a Western individualist and secularist outlook.<sup>49</sup>

Photios Kontoglou (1895–1965) was a prominent artist and public intellectual in Greece who was similarly dismayed by what he took to be the wholesale infection of the Orthodox artistic tradition by Western-inspired Renaissance art.<sup>50</sup> Kontoglou’s passion for the Byzantine artistic idiom and his acerbic

<sup>45</sup> The general thrust of the traditionalists’ ecclesiology is that there is one single Christian faith, enshrined during the patristic period, and that any form of engagement with the religious other that does not repudiate the errors of the other is a capitulation of Orthodox teaching, faith, and tradition. Because, as Jonathan Z. Smith observed, the proximate other is the most dangerous, the vast majority of the anti-ecumenical concern is directed toward Roman Catholics and the Oriental (non-Chalcedonian) Orthodox. Jonathan Z. Smith, “What a Difference Difference Makes,” in *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 251–302.

<sup>46</sup> Melitius IV, “Encyclical of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 1920.” For an English translation of the encyclical, see *The Struggle Against Ecumenism*, 177–81.

<sup>47</sup> Throughout the twentieth century, one of the few things that united all of the branches of the Old Calendarist movement was the belief that Western Christians, especially Roman Catholics, are arch-heretics, and that any collaboration with them—calendar or otherwise—was a capitulation to the truth of the One, Holy, and Apostolic faith.

<sup>48</sup> He believed that a “true” icon involves a spiritual and visual experience that is in continuity with the living tradition of the Church. When that experience is lacking, when the link to tradition is broken, then art becomes secularized.

<sup>49</sup> Léonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of the Icon*, trans. G. E. H. Palmer and E. Kadloubovsky (Boston: Boston Book and Art Shop, 1955), esp. 49. Léonid Ouspensky’s most developed reflection on the link between theology and iconography is his two-volume *Theology of the Icon*, trans. Anthony Gythiel (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1992). For a sympathetic study of his life and thought, see Patrick Doolan, *Recovering the Icon: The Life and Works of Leonid Ouspensky* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2008).

<sup>50</sup> Kontoglou was a Greek Christian, born in Ottoman Anatolia, who like so many other Christian intellectuals of his time went to the West (Paris) for his education. He returned to Asia Minor after WWI, but with the situation for Christians there deteriorating, he soon fled to Greece

denunciation of Western styles were key components in the eventual resurgence of Byzantine-styled painting throughout the Hellenistic Orthodox world.<sup>51</sup> While the majority of his writing was in the realm of art, he also wrote aggressively against the “heresy” of Roman Catholic teaching, and any Orthodox Christian (including Patriarch Athenagoras) whom he believed to be infected by it.<sup>52</sup>

In one particularly revealing essay published shortly before his death, Kontoglou employed the word “Papism” as a proxy for all that he believed to be wrong with Western Christianity in general (individualism, materialism, innovation) and Roman Catholicism specifically (*flilioque*, purgatory, papal infallibility).<sup>53</sup> Throughout, he juxtaposes the errors of innovation to the never-changing character of the Orthodox Church’s Apostolic Tradition.<sup>54</sup> Tradition functions for Kontoglou as a substitute for everything that the West is not. He offers little examination of how tradition is formed, how it is maintained, or how it is employed. Tradition is simply the safeguard against the evil of innovation.

In another essay, Kontoglou employs “tradition” as a kind of stand-in for divine grace, which enlivens the souls of the faithful Orthodox. By way of contrast, the individualistic Western modernist, who turns away from tradition,

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where he eventually became a prominent writer and artist. In many ways, Kontoglou and Ouspensky were allied in their effort to restore the traditional Orthodox artistic idiom. When Ouspensky published his first treatment of the icon in Paris (Léonid Ouspensky, *L’Icône, vision du monde spirituel*) in the late 1940s, Kontoglou translated it into Greek. The two did not agree on all things though: Ouspensky believed that the pinnacle of the Orthodox aesthetic was achieved by the Russian artist Rublev, while Kontoglou believed it existed in the Byzantine masters.

<sup>51</sup> Kontoglou died in Athens in 1965, before the revival took place. But by the 1980s nearly every Orthodox Church in Greece and the United States that was newly built or could afford to replace its iconography employed the Byzantine style promoted by Kontoglou. The vast majority of Kontoglou’s writings remain in Greek only. Readers looking for English translations of some of his essays about sacred art should consult Cavarnos, *Fine Arts and Tradition*.

<sup>52</sup> Kontoglou did not live long enough to comment upon it after the fact, but he knew of the planned meeting between Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras in Jerusalem in 1965. At this historic meeting, the two leaders officially lifted their churches’ mutual excommunications dating to the year 1054 CE.

<sup>53</sup> “Papism was born of men’s haughtiness and their sinful desire to rule in their own way over themselves, for which reason the religion of Christ has been disfigured by their evil desires, their having manufactured a false Church, in which everything has been altered to agree with the materialistic and worldly proclivities of these same pseudo-Christians who created this disfigured Church.” A little later, he adds, “For centuries, they have not ceased devising cunning novelties.” Photius Kontoglou, “What Orthodoxy Is and What Papism Is,” in *Orthodoxy and Papism*, by Archimandrite Chrysostomos (Etna, CA: Center for Traditional Orthodox Studies, 1983), 53–54. For a complete list of Kontoglou’s writings, see P. V. Paschou, *Kontoglou* (Athens: Ekdoseis “Armos,” 1991).

<sup>54</sup> The Orthodox Church “has remained unchanged, through the course of the centuries . . . and is not subject to correction or further development, either by adding to it, or taking from it, just as nothing is lacking from it, nor is anything superfluous to it.” Kontoglou, “What Orthodoxy Is and What Papism Is,” 51–52.



forfeits his or her soul.<sup>55</sup> For Kontoglou, like Ouspensky, the rejection of tradition began in Western Europe, with the Renaissance, and it gradually overtook the entire world, including Orthodoxy.<sup>56</sup> Although they were primarily concerned with Orthodox aesthetics and a revival of what they believed to be theologically authentic motifs, they offered a significant ideological precedent for “tradition” as a theological category of evaluation, and they used adherence to tradition as a weapon against other Orthodox who failed to recognize the threat of Western corruption.<sup>57</sup>

In 1956, the Greek American author Constantine Cavarinos (1918–2011) founded a press in Belmont, Massachusetts, that he used to publish nearly one hundred small books on Orthodox saints and Orthodox spirituality, including several works in conversation with Kontoglou.<sup>58</sup> With more nuance and less explicit animus than Kontoglou, Cavarinos similarly juxtaposed the truth of Orthodox tradition against the multiple errors of Western Christianity, which most explicitly endanger the Orthodox through their participation in the ecumenical movement.<sup>59</sup> In writings and lectures, Cavarinos recognized the ways in which cultural and political forces at work in Greece since the time of the War of Independence had opened the door to Western assimilation. Thus, for Cavarinos, the Church of Greece had become infected by Roman Catholic religious influence as a consequence of the country’s reliance on Western political support.<sup>60</sup>

In a characteristic lecture delivered in Athens in 1970, Cavarinos attacked a series of Western “modernisms” that plagued the “New Calendarists.”<sup>61</sup> For Cavarinos, modernism functions as a stand-in for the cultural appropri-

<sup>55</sup> “Tradition is good for those who experience strongly the eternity that is within themselves and which they serve with ardor and faith, as they do religion. For they exist and live within the natural rhythm of the cosmos. Tradition is a foundation and power for living souls. Neither tradition nor anything else can rescue and enliven dead souls.” Photius Kontoglou, “Free Art and Tradition,” in Cavarinos, *Fine Arts and Tradition*, 37.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 38–50.

<sup>57</sup> In a remarkably discerning Master’s Thesis at St. Vladimir’s Theological Seminary, Eric Freeman demonstrated that the iconological writings of Ouspensky and Kontoglou (along with those of Pavel Florensky) possess deep methodological problems and, in fact, completely fail to appreciate the history of Orthodox theological aesthetics, which was never the static form that these authors wished it to be. Eric Freeman, “Redefining the Icon: The Problem of Innovation in the Writings of Florensky, Ouspensky, and Kontoglou” (Master’s thesis, St. Vladimir’s Theological Seminary, 2009).

<sup>58</sup> He called the press the “Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies,” which should not be confused with similarly named academic programs in the United Kingdom and Germany.

<sup>59</sup> Among other works, see Constantine Cavarinos *The Question of Union*, trans. Patrick Barker (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1992), and *Ecumenism Examined: A Concise Analytical Discussion of the Contemporary Ecumenical Movement* (Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1996).

<sup>60</sup> “These innovations spread gradually also among the Greeks, from the Revolution of 1821 and after, when Greece, having been freed politically from Turkey, began to be enslaved spiritually to Europe.” Constantine Cavarinos, *Orthodox Tradition and Modernism*, trans. Patrick Barker (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1992), 18–19.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* The lecture was originally published in Greek by Orthodox Typos in 1971.

ation of Roman Catholic styles of music, art, and clerical dress.<sup>62</sup> The antidote to these various corruptions is Orthodox “tradition,” which is presented as a timeless character of Orthodox spirituality that was not so much articulated by the great ecumenical councils or by the fathers of the church as it was preserved, unchanged, by them.

For example, according to Cavarnos, artistic style is not a matter of cultural affinity or aesthetic choice. Only one form, the authentic Christian form of Orthodox tradition, is appropriate for Christian piety. All other artistic expressions are innovative, corrosive, and lead to apostasy.<sup>63</sup> Like Ouspensky and Kontoglou, “tradition” functions for Cavarnos as a placeholder for that which opposes the innovations of Western influence.<sup>64</sup> In other words, tradition is not so much a specific form of music, art, or dress as it is the constitutive remainder when Western influence has been removed. Here and elsewhere, Cavarnos offers little consideration of the possibility that the expression of Orthodox Christian art and music evolved over time. But more surprising is his penchant for supporting his various positions by quoting a handful of Anglican authors who endorse (in especially Orientalized ways) various aspects of Eastern Christian music, art, and dress.<sup>65</sup>

From its very beginning, the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies at St. Gregory Palamas monastery integrated the insights of Kontoglou and Cavarnos into its idiosyncratic vision of Orthodox teaching—the latter even served for many years as an academic advisor to the center. The center’s first publication included a translation and commentary by the center’s director of one Kontoglou’s last anti-Catholic essays.<sup>66</sup> In that work, Archimandrite Chrysostomos argued that the Orthodox Church (writ large) continued to suffer under the captivity of a hegemonic Western-oriented discourse that shaped its historiographic epistemology.<sup>67</sup> That cultural captivity enabled the passive acceptance of, rather than a passionate resistance to, ecumenical gestures from Roman Catholicism.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Ironically, Cavarnos’s accusation of “modernism” is borrowed from Roman Catholic controversies of the previous century.

<sup>63</sup> “The new iconography is not only unrelated to the Orthodox faith but is actually contrary to it, since its expression is carnal rather than spiritual.” Cavarnos, *Orthodox Tradition and Modernism*, 19.

<sup>64</sup> Kontoglou and Cavarnos were intimate associates. Following the death of the latter, the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies published the correspondence of the two authors, revealing their shared concerns about secularism, ecumenism, and the lack of traditional faith in the broader Orthodox world. *Two Modern Titans of Mind and Spirit: The Private Correspondence of Constantine Cavarnos and Photios Kontoglou* (Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2014).

<sup>65</sup> See, e.g., Cavarnos, *Orthodox Tradition and Modernism*, 14, 17, 20, and 26.

<sup>66</sup> Chrysostomos, *Orthodoxy and Papism*.

<sup>67</sup> For authors like Chrysostomos, Cyprian, and Cavarnos, the great tragedy lies in the fact that Eastern Christians have succumbed to the hegemonic discourse of the West—they have accepted Latin historiography and it is for that reason that they are so willing to compromise and to seek union with the papists.

<sup>68</sup> For example, in the introduction he writes, “Orthodox have not had sufficient time to make their true stand before the other Christian religions of the West. They are still struggling to rid

To counter that domineering narrative, Chrysostomos proposed an alternative historical account, which asserted that the authentic Christian experience had been in the Hellenistic/Roman/Christian nexus of Byzantium. The Carolingian intervention in European history had been an aberration, and its desecration of the once legitimate Church of Rome a tragedy of Christian history.<sup>69</sup> To understand the Orthodox Church in modern times, he writes, one must “free himself from the theological suppositions which have formed the popular Western theologies. Only then can he prepare himself to grasp what the Orthodox tradition is.”<sup>70</sup> Because this has not happened, because the Orthodox living in the West have failed to understand their own tradition, they “find the traditional (canonical) Orthodox refusal to pray or worship with non-Orthodox ludicrous and even un-Christian.”<sup>71</sup> If the broader Orthodox world could only understand their own tradition and escape the spiritual lethargy imposed upon it by the West, “they [would] return to the Christianity which we *traditionalist Orthodox* have preserved intact from the time of the Apostles.”<sup>72</sup>

#### MAINSTREAMING TRADITION

Following its initial publication, the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies embarked upon a wide-ranging campaign that simultaneously defended their particular stake in the Old Calendarist quagmire and challenged the broader Orthodox public to recognize the danger presented by the ecumenical movement. The founder of the parent monastery in Greece, now a bishop for his sect, published several anti-ecumenical pamphlets both in Greece and through the center, including *The Panheresy of Ecumenism* and *The Heresy of Ecumenism and the Patristic Stand of the Orthodox*.<sup>73</sup> The center also appropriated other aspects of the anti-ecumenical effort employed elsewhere, such as the promotion of the cult of the so-called Pillars of Orthodoxy: St. Photios, St. Gregory Palamas, and St. Mark of Ephesus.<sup>74</sup> For Orthodox anti-

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their own thinking of historiographies, theologies, and world-views imposed on them by others. Weak in this struggle, many have simply succumbed to the enticements of an ecumenical vision and have ceased witnessing the singularity of their beliefs.” Chrysostomos, *Orthodoxy and Papism*.

<sup>69</sup> Although not referenced in the work, Chrysostomos draws deeply in this regard from the work of another Greek-American author, John Romanides, whom I examine below.

<sup>70</sup> Chrysostomos, *Orthodoxy and Papism*, 29.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>73</sup> English translations of these works were published by the center in 2004 and 1998, respectively.

<sup>74</sup> Among other things, the center published a short biography of St. Mark (Constantine Cavarinos, *St. Mark of Ephesus*, trans. Hieromonk Patapios [Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1997]), and as recently as 2009 the center published an English translation of a prayer service dedicated to the Pillars of Orthodoxy (Cyprian of Oreoi, *The Synaxis of the Three New Great Hierarchs* [Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2009]).



ecumenists, these three saints are thought to be especially significant because they each, in their own way, preserved the authenticity of the Orthodox tradition against Latin error at critical historical moments (in the ninth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, respectively). But in the hands of modern polemicists, the historical presentation of these figures routinely yields to a narrative of ideological consistency.<sup>75</sup>

By the mid-1980s, the Old Calendarists' rejection of ecumenism and its conflation of ecumenism with the errors of a Western-oriented modernism had gained considerable traction outside of the narrow confines of its sectarian community, even if it had failed to convince its new allies to break sacramental unity with the institutional church. New monastic houses in the United States within the jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America (GOA) that were under the spiritual supervision of the controversial Elder Ephraim routinely condemned the GOA's and the Ecumenical Patriarch's involvement in the ecumenical movement.<sup>76</sup> In most ways, Fr. Ephraim's monasteries were ideologically aligned with the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies and actively promoted its publications even though the two communities were not in sacramental communion with one another. Fr. Ephraim's monastic network effectively offered the advocates of traditional Orthodoxy a backdoor to institutional credibility of their ideas. It also offered access to an audience exponentially larger than the traditionalists previously possessed. Not only do Fr. Ephraim's monasteries receive a large number of lay pilgrims, but the elder counts among his spiritual disciples dozens of GOA and ROCOR parish priests who have appropriated and disseminated to their parish communities a form of the traditionalist rhetoric that had until that point existed almost entirely among the Old Calendar schismatics.

Despite the rise in criticism of the ecumenical movement beyond the Old Calendarist circle, it took time for the precise slogan "traditional Orthodoxy" to gain currency even among those most hostile to Western Christianity. For example, when George Metallinos published his influential rejection of Roman Catholic and Protestant baptism in 1983, *I Confess One Baptism*, he did

<sup>75</sup> These are works of modern hagiography that have purposes well beyond the goal of historical objectivity. Among other deliberate oversights, these hagiographies ignore the fact that Photios was opposed by the monastic community of his day, Gregory Palamas was a moderate among his contemporaries on the issue of the *filioque*, and Mark of Ephesus was far more willing to engage the Latin Church than any of the Old Calendarist groups who celebrate him as a defender of Orthodoxy. To my knowledge, the most extensive Old Calendar promotion of the Pillars of Orthodoxy belongs to a ROCOR community, also in the American West, Holy Apostles Convent in Buena Vista, Colorado. Holy Apostles Convent, *The Lives of the Pillars of Orthodoxy* (Buena Vista, CO: Holy Apostles Convent and Dormition Skete, 1990).

<sup>76</sup> Technically, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of the United States is an Eparchy of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and it is thus institutionally separate from the Church of Greece, which is its own self-governing church.

not employ any variation of the phrase “παραδοσιακή Ορθοδοξία,” nor does it appear in the 1994 English translation of the same work.<sup>77</sup>

Perhaps one of the most important reasons for the eventual mainstreaming of traditional Orthodoxy as a marker of self-identity, at least among American Orthodox, was the broadening of the category beyond its anti-ecumenical origins. In the years just prior to the founding of the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, an American convert to Orthodoxy via ROCOR, Fr. Seraphim Rose (1934–82), had begun to employ the double adjectival “traditional Orthodox” as a modifier for authentic Christian piety, worship, dress, and music (e.g., “traditional Orthodox piety” or “traditional Orthodox music”). For example, in a sermon delivered in December of 1979, he argued that Orthodox Christianity in the United States was often little more than an Eastern form of Protestantism. “Modernist” Orthodox jurisdictions—by which he meant the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the once-Russian “Orthodox Church of America”—had capitulated to a “worldly spirit” by introducing new elements into their worship (such as pews and organs) and by shortening their services “all for the sake of making money.”<sup>78</sup> Rose added, however:

The churches of our Russian Church Outside of Russia are usually quite different, with no pews or organs, and a more old-worldly kind of piety; and there has been a noticeable revival of traditional church iconography and other church arts. The traditional Orthodox influence is visible even in such external things as the way our clergy dress and the beards which almost all of our clergy have. Just a few decades ago almost no Orthodox clergy in America had beards or wore *rassas* [i.e., cassocks] on the street; and while this is something outward, it is still a reflection of a traditional mentality which has had many inward, spiritual results also. A few of the more conservative priests in other jurisdictions have now begun to return to more traditional Orthodox ways, but if so, it is largely under the influence of our Church, and a number of these priests have told us that they look to our Russian Church Outside of Russia as a standard and inspiration of genuine Orthodoxy.<sup>79</sup>

Here, the promotion of traditional Orthodoxy is not so much anti-ecumenical polemic as a bulwark against the subtle trappings of modernity. In fact, Rose was generally amenable to aspects of Latin Christian teaching—he even wrote an apology for the theology of Augustine of Hippo.<sup>80</sup> For Rose, traditional Orthodoxy was the antidote to modern thinking and practice that had aban-

<sup>77</sup> George Metallinos, *Ομολογώ ἐν βάπτισμα* (Athens: Tynos, 1996), and *I Confess One Baptism*, trans. Hieromonk Seraphim (Mt. Athos: St. Paul’s Monastery, 1994).

<sup>78</sup> Seraphim Rose, “Orthodoxy in America: Its Historical Past and Present,” St. Xenia Orthodox Church, accessed May 22, 2017, <http://www.stxenia.org/files/history/ortham.html>.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Seraphim Rose, *The Place of the Blessed Augustine in the Orthodox Church* (Plantina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1983).

doned the spiritual life and the revelation of God, far more than it was a counterattack against the church's ecumenical involvement.<sup>81</sup>

Rose is an intriguing figure. A former student of Buddhism and a practicing homosexual, he converted to Orthodox Christianity in 1962 and became a monk in 1970. Although he died young, he was a prolific writer.<sup>82</sup> The themes of "traditional Orthodox" and "traditional Orthodoxy" were never central components of his rhetorical strategy, nor were they key elements of his community's self-justification like they were for the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies.<sup>83</sup> But like the center, Rose possessed a deeply sectarian bent, and it is not inconsequential that at the time of his conversion to Orthodoxy he chose a community that was in open conflict with the majority of the Orthodox world. It is also worth noting that Rose is now one of the most widely read authors among Orthodox Christians in Russia who harbor nativist and/or fundamentalist tendencies.<sup>84</sup>

Rose's less caustic promotion of traditional Orthodoxy opened a further avenue for its adoption as a marker of self-identity. Indeed, those who actively campaign for his sainthood identify him as the quintessential spokesperson for traditional Orthodoxy.<sup>85</sup> Like Cavarnos, Rose assigned theological significance to a set of cultural and ritualistic practices that were then juxtaposed to modernity. In his hands, traditional Orthodoxy became a marker for any Orthodox Christian who nostalgically saw the past, even a mythologized past, as superior to the present.<sup>86</sup>

Today, "traditional Orthodoxy" is a common marker of self-identity among a wide group of Orthodox Christians. Even the most cursory of internet

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, the hefty tome condemning evolution via early Christian commentaries on Genesis that was assembled from his various papers by Rose's disciples nearly a generation after his death. This volume continues to attract a wide readership in Orthodox circles. Seraphim Rose, *Genesis, Creation, and Early Man* (Plantina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2000).

<sup>82</sup> His endorsement of the so-called Toll Houses made him a controversial writer in Orthodox circles. According to Rose, all humans must pass through a series of aerial toll houses after death as part of their initial judgment by God, where they will be accused of specific sins and either permitted to advance to the next gate or be consigned to hell. Although small and unconnected aspects of the teaching do date to the premodern period, it is widely discredited. Seraphim Rose, *The Soul after Death* (repr., Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 2014).

<sup>83</sup> Although Rose was not personally anti-ecumenical in spirit, the ROCOR community was and is largely anti-Western in orientation. Ironically, ROCOR's seminary for the United States in Jordonville, New York, has always employed Michael Pomazansky textbook of dogmatic theology, which applies a very Western (scholastic) approach to the explication of Orthodox teaching. Michael Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, 3rd ed. (Plantina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2009). I wish to thank Gregory Tucker for this astute observation.

<sup>84</sup> See Irina Papkova, *The Orthodox Church and Russian Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 61.

<sup>85</sup> There are several websites and blogs that now circulate Rose's writings and/or advocate for his sainthood. See, among others, <http://orthodoxinfo.com>, <http://classicalchristianity.com>, and <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/nootherfoundation/appreciating-seraphim-rose/>.

<sup>86</sup> It is likely for these reasons that he has such a large following among the most conservative elements within the Russian Orthodox Church, where Russian translations of his writing circulate widely. See Papkova, *The Orthodox Church*, esp. 62.



searches, in English, Greek, or Russian, will yield dozens of bloggers, Facebook groups, parishes, and cross-jurisdictional Orthodox affiliations that employ “traditional/ist Orthodox” and “traditional/ist Orthodoxy” as a self-designated label of religious identification, which sets them apart—implicitly or explicitly—from other Orthodox Christians.<sup>87</sup> Whereas that distinction once coincided with sacramental isolation, it no longer does. Indeed, one of the most fascinating evolutions that has occurred as the slogan has become more popular is that even though its adherents often assert aggressive anti-ecumenical, anti-Western, and antimodern positions, they typically do not reject sacramental unity with those Orthodox Christians they perceive as having capitulated to those forces. Perhaps this is because they have essentially elided “traditional Orthodoxy” with notions of political and cultural conservatism rather than religious isolationism.<sup>88</sup>

The convocation of the Holy and Great Synod in June of 2016 provided the traditional Orthodox across the world with a galvanizing moment. While some heralded the council as the most significant gathering of Orthodox bishops in more than a thousand years,<sup>89</sup> for many self-described traditional Orthodox, the council represented a new level of institutional betrayal of the church’s tradition. The most radical among the traditionalists asserted that the council marked the coming of the Antichrist.<sup>90</sup> Few went that far, but even the most measured traditionalists objected to the council’s document “Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the World” because it not only affirmed the Orthodox Church’s participation in the ecumenical movement, but it officially proscribed ecumenical obstructionism.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, hundreds of self-professed traditionalists, a group that now includes canonical bishops as well as priests, monks, and laity, undertook a massive, if

<sup>87</sup> For example, as of December 9, 2016, the Facebook group “Traditional Orthodoxy (Canonical)” had over 13,000 members, including the president of the largest Orthodox seminary in the United States.

<sup>88</sup> For an impressive study of the significant overlap between theological groups within the Russian Orthodox Church and their political ideologies, see Papkova, *The Orthodox Church*. Papkova identifies three camps (liberals, traditionalists, and fundamentalists—her terms) and compellingly shows how these religious communities reflect distinctive approaches to contemporary Russian politics, particularly as they pertain to Western engagement.

<sup>89</sup> The complete text of the six documents confirmed by the council is available at the official website, <http://www.holycouncil.org>. For a thorough overview of the challenges and opportunities provided by the council, see John Chrysavgis, *Toward the Holy and Great Council: Retrieving a Culture of Conciliarity and Communion* (New York: Department of Inter-Orthodox, Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, 2016).

<sup>90</sup> In Russia, fear-mongering by some activists reached such a state that the head of the Department of External Church relations, Metropolitan Hilarion Alfiev, had to issue an official statement saying that there was no reason to view the coming synod as a precursor to the Antichrist. “Russian Church Calms down the Believers Who Consider Pan-Orthodox Council ‘Anti-Christ,’” *pravoslavie.ru*, accessed May 22, 2017, <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/90349.htm>.

<sup>91</sup> “Relations of the Orthodox Church with the Rest of the Christian World,” *Holy and Great Council, Pentecost 2016*, accessed May, 22, 2017, <https://www.holycouncil.org/-/rest-of-christian-world>.

loosely coordinated, propaganda campaign to thwart all or part of the council.<sup>92</sup> One of the most fascinating aspects of the transnational dissemination of traditionalist rhetoric was the role played by bilingual converts to Orthodoxy, who, for American audiences, appeared in the vanguard of the condemnation of the council on the basis of its supposed capitulation to ecumenism, modernism, and general Westernism.<sup>93</sup> In the end, the obstructionists failed in their bid to derail the council, but they did succeed in scaling back both the language of the documents and the scope of global participation.<sup>94</sup>

What all of the modern advocates of traditional Orthodoxy fail to understand is that the shift from “Orthodox tradition” to “traditional Orthodoxy” has genuine theological significance. Whereas the noun “tradition” (stemming from the Latin *traditio*) has been understood within Christianity to mean the continuous act of handing over, from one generation to the next, the faith of the apostles, as an adjective, the word functions as a modifier for Orthodoxy—thus implying that there are multiple forms of Orthodoxy, only one of them traditional. The great irony is that the very supposition that there could be multiple forms of Orthodoxy lies in contradistinction to the confession of a singular faith that the traditional Orthodox claim to profess. In effect, traditional Orthodoxy not only implies a certain redundancy, it also contains an inherent self-contradiction.

#### INDEPENDENCE AND THE IMAGINED BEFORE

As noted, in each of the Balkan independence movements of the nineteenth century, revolutionaries simultaneously harnessed Orthodox Christian sentiment as a justification for seeking liberation from their Muslim overlords (i.e., the Ottomans) and allied themselves with Western European colonial figures to achieve their nationalist objective. But the turn to the West was not unambiguous, nor was it embraced by everyone. Among the Greeks, advocates of the new Hellenism, like Adamantios Koraes, articulated the means

<sup>92</sup> An extreme and largely uninformed example of episcopal neotraditionalism would be that of Metropolitan Seraphim of Pireaus. See George Demacopoulos, “Innovation in the Guise of Tradition,” *Public Orthodoxy*, accessed May 22, 2017, <https://publicorthodoxy.org/2016/03/22/innovation-in-the-guise-of-tradition-anti-ecumenist-efforts-to-derail-the-great-and-holy-council/>.

<sup>93</sup> For example, Peter Heers, a convert to Orthodoxy with fundamentalist tendencies who lived in Greece in the months before the council, used social media such as the Traditional Orthodox Facebook forum to disseminate English translations of documents produced by anti-ecumenical figures in the Church of Greece as well as updates on gatherings of anti-council activists in Eastern Europe. The most comprehensive study of the phenomenon of Protestant conversions to Orthodoxy in the United States is Oliver Herbel, *Turning to Tradition: Converts and the Making of an American Orthodox Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>94</sup> Both the Church of Georgia and the Church of Bulgaria yielded to the pressure and did not participate in the council. The Church of Russia also did not participate, but it did not object to the documents. Rather, it objected to the decision to move forward without Georgia and Bulgaria. The Church of Antioch also withdrew but for reasons altogether different.

by which Greece could assert its national distinctiveness after centuries of enslavement to the Ottomans: by following the example of European Enlightenment nations, like France, which had themselves drawn so deeply from ideas of ancient Greek democracy. Others, like Konstantinos Oikonomos, argued instead that an emergent Greece should align itself with Tsarist Russia because the Russians, unlike the British, French, and Germans, had a common Orthodox heritage.<sup>95</sup> The possibility of a Russian alliance faded rather quickly, but the reconstitution of an Orthodox Greece, or Romania, or Serbia, independent of Latin theological corruption, became a subject of intense scrutiny and internal division for each of these fledgling nation-states.<sup>96</sup>

It is against the backdrop of this complicated matrix of cultural, political, and religious ambiguity that the debates about Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement and the possible adoption of the Gregorian calendar first emerged. For the Old Calendarists, the issue was never about the calendar *per se*. Nor was it even exclusively about ecumenism. Rather, the issue was the extent to which the Greek state and the Greek Church could retain an authentic identity that was free of cultural exploitation and, thus, true to an imagined religious before. As we saw with authors like Kontoglou and Cavarnos, the very articulation of the essence of Orthodox tradition was the “not West.” For them, the Church of Greece, like the Greek state, had capitulated to Western political pressure and the lure of modernity. To be genuinely Orthodox did not mean a return to the Ottomans, of course, but it did mean a steadfast rejection of every form of Western innovation.

But the rejection of the West as an instrument of communal solidarity has found broad appeal in certain traditional Orthodox circles where the political situation in Greece and Balkans has little currency. In this respect, Ouspensky and Rose offer fascinating comparisons (one Russian émigré, the other American convert) in that, while they had very different political experiences from Kontoglou or Cavarnos, they similarly developed nostalgic views of an Orthodox before that predated Western corruption.

However critical the new traditionalists were in their condemnation of Western Christianity and the ecumenical movement, their audience was always an internal one; their adversaries were always those Orthodox who failed to see the danger. Thus, it became critical to construct and reinforce an East/West binary wherein the West always represented innovation and

<sup>95</sup> The fault lines between pro-West/pro-Russia and pro-Church of Greece/pro-Ecumenical Patriarchate did not always align. See Dimitris Stamatopoulos, “The Orthodox Church of Greece,” in Leustean, *Orthodox Christianity and Nationalism*, esp. 47–52.

<sup>96</sup> At the end of the twentieth century, when many of the same nations were emerging from Communist regimes that imposed secularization on their societies, there was a struggle to resolve the link between national and religious identity in a way that could account for pluralistic societies. The case of the former Yugoslavia is particularly revealing. See Balkic-Hayden, “Nesting Orientalisms.”



error and the East always represented tradition and authenticity. On this score, one of the most important developments in the traditionalists' eventual canon of self-understanding was the establishment of an alternative historiography, which situated a Hellenistic and Roman Byzantium (or a Russian alternative) as the normative Christian experience.

One of the most enthusiastic spokespersons for a diametrical opposition between the authentic Christian experience of Byzantium and the depraved character of a Frankish and Popish West was John Romanides.<sup>97</sup> A Greek-American, Romanides studied in Paris with several of the Russian émigré theologians who were themselves engaged in the act of theological retrieval.<sup>98</sup> But whereas Florovsky had seen continuity with many of the fathers of the Latin patristic period, and whereas Lossky had situated the error of Latin teaching squarely in the scholastic period, for Romanides the ideological separation between East and West went all the way back to the fourth century, to the figure of Augustine of Hippo. For Romanides, Augustine was responsible for introducing a theological wedge between Christian East and West from which the West could never recover.<sup>99</sup> By pitting a genuine Christian Byzantium against an individualistic, materialist, and philosophically errant West, Romanides offered a historical model for Orthodox countries like Greece to free themselves not only from the theological errors of papism but from the medieval menace of the Franks, who had been the crusading scourge of Christian Byzantium, and, thus, the entire Orthodox world. Romanides, of course, was not alone. Others, like Christos Yannaras, offered similarly sweeping assessments that divided Orthodox civilization from a philosophically bankrupt West.<sup>100</sup>

#### A POSTCOLONIAL MOVEMENT

One of the most intriguing dynamics of the Orthodox postcolonial struggle (whether it was the political activists of the Balkan independence movements, the Russian émigrés of Paris, or the traditionalists within the Greek Church) is that nearly every significant advocate of an Orthodox independence was actually educated or lived in the West. Paris alone had drawn Koraes, Ouspensky, Kontoglou, Lossky, Florovsky, and Romanides, to name

<sup>97</sup> See John Romanides, *Ρωμανία Ρούμελη* (Thessaloniki: Rounara, 1975), and *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine: An Interplay between Theology and Society* (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Press, 1991).

<sup>98</sup> Romanides studied in several places. He received a BA from Hellenic College in Brookline, MA. He also studied at Yale University before moving to Paris. He received his PhD in Athens.

<sup>99</sup> See George Demacopoulos and Aristotle Papanikolaou, "Augustine and the Orthodox: The 'West' in the East," in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Readings of Augustine*, esp. 27–33.

<sup>100</sup> On Yannaras and the West, see Pantelis Kalaitzidis, "The Image of the West in Contemporary Greek Theology," 142–60; and Basilio Petrà, "Christos Yannaras and the Idea of 'Dysis,'" 161–80; both in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*.

only the most obvious. Other advocates of traditional Orthodoxy, including Constantine Cavarnos, Seraphim Rose, and nearly everyone associated with the Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, were educated in the United States. It is thus no wonder that, even in their most deliberate efforts to shed the yoke of Western intellectual hegemony, these authors consistently imitate the methods of Roman Catholic scholarship of their contemporaries (such as historiography and the retrieval of ancient sources). In other words, for all of their claims to return to an authentic Orthodox Christian mode of thought, these authors continuously and uncritically employed the discursive and epistemological dynamics of a decidedly Western educational frame of reference.

Although they postulated multiple means to achieve their desired independence, the advocates of a distinctive “traditional” Orthodoxy never explicitly wrestled with their most fundamental challenge: the inescapability of the Western other. What Ouspensky, Kontoglou, Romanides, and Archimandrite Chrysostomos all failed to acknowledge is that there is no return to the before that does not leave a trace of the after—any articulation of Orthodox teaching that accounts for the West, or any other “other,” is always a new narrative because of the simple fact that the narrative now must account for that other. Indeed, the “presence” of Roman Catholicism is noticeable throughout their writing.

On this score, the Orthodox story is hardly unique. Many Christian communities have wrestled with the friction that often exists at the intersection between religious tradition and modernity. We have already discussed the case of the *Nouvelle Théologie* in the Roman Catholic Church of the mid-twentieth century. But there are other, more provocative cases that could provide further points of comparison, such as the controversy surrounding the Pueblo Indians who attempted to retain their traditional ceremonial dance despite their conversion to Roman Catholicism.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps more directly relevant is the conflict that occurred when rural African Americans moved North after World War I, only to find that their Northern coreligionists found their Christian practices too primitive and in need of modernizing.<sup>102</sup> And there are even more explicit examples of the connection between American colonial activity and Evangelical Protestantism’s effort to bring “Christian civilization” to “primitive” parts of the world.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the tension between tra-

<sup>101</sup> Interestingly, Protestant Christians asserted that the Pueblos needed to abandon both (i.e., their native customs and their Catholic ritual) to be part of a modern America. Their story is famously examined by Tisa Wenger, *We Have a Religion: The 1920’s Pueblo Indian Dance Controversy and American Religious Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009). I would like to thank John Seitz for pointing me to this connection.

<sup>102</sup> Milton Sernett, *Bound for the Promised Land: African American Religion and the Great Migration* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

<sup>103</sup> See, e.g., James Reed, “American Foreign Policy, the Politics and Missions of Josiah Strong, 1890–1900,” *Church History* 41 (1972): 2430–45.

dition and modernity and the demonization of an "other" in the context of the traditional/modernist divide is hardly unique to the Orthodox community. What is unique to the Orthodox story is that it offers perhaps the lone example in Christian history where a colonized community was Christian prior to its colonization.

Today, the promotion of traditional Orthodoxy retains much of its post-colonial heritage, not only in terms of its animating focus (anti-ecumenism, antimodernism, anti-Westernism), but also with respect to ways in which it seeks to articulate a unifying narrative of authenticity that is unmoved by external forces and the simple processes of time. On the one hand, traditional Orthodoxy continues to derive much of its appeal from political alienation. For example, many in Greece feel that their nation's integration with the West via the European Union has brought devastation, not only economically but culturally. Many bishops of the Church of Greece decry the European Union's mandates on secularism as a form of neocolonialism that is stripping Greece of its Orthodox heritage.<sup>104</sup> Elsewhere, broader trends in secularism and secularization, including, of course, the legalization of gay marriage in most Western countries, has drawn sharp rebuke from leaders of the Orthodox Church. Some institutional bodies, like the Church of Russia, have gone so far as to question the compatibility of Enlightenment-principled human rights and Orthodox teaching.<sup>105</sup> Not only is this opening a new East/West divide reminiscent of the Cold War, pitting a traditional Orthodox East against a godless, secular West, it is also renewing old fractures within the Orthodox Church along modernist/traditionalist lines. Once again, the language of traditional Orthodoxy has become a stand-in for anti-Western and antisecular forces perceived to have infiltrated and corrupted some corners of the church's hierarchy and seminaries.

In all of this, we see the extent to which the Orthodox dependence on/resistance to Latin Christianity that began so many centuries ago continues to plague modern Orthodox communities. To be sure, traditional Orthodoxy is just one of many contemporary Orthodox responses to centuries of entanglement with a hegemonic Western other, but there is little denying that its animating force comes from a sharp, if contested, response to the question of Orthodox engagement with the West.

If we understand postcolonial critique to be a scholarly means to scrutinize and combat the residual effects of exploitation of colonized peoples in all of its cultural, political, and economic manifestations, then what we find in the Orthodox situation is a unique example of the processes and

<sup>104</sup> See, e.g., Effie Fokas, "Religion in the Greek Public Sphere: Debating Europe's Influence," in Demacopoulos and Papanikolaou, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, 181–92.

<sup>105</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the official policy of the Russian Orthodox Church is still far more receptive of the West and the role of democracy than some of its constituent members. See Papkova, *The Orthodox Church*.



consequences of Western European intellectual hegemony: unique, not only because of the particular ways in which the Orthodox world has wrestled with modernity and the West, but because it offers perhaps the most fascinating example of what happened when a Christian community was itself colonized. In the tri-continental region to which we typically apply the resources of postcolonial critique, Christianity is an agent of, rather than a victim of, Western European colonial force. But the Eastern Christian experience—and the emergence of traditional Orthodoxy as one of its most distinctive responses—forces us to rethink our assumptions about Christianity and its others.

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# On Religious Freedom and Its Free Exercise\*

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Especially during the past half century, the relation of democracy to religious convictions and communities has been the object of a protean and notably enduring discussion in both the academy and the larger public. That a democratic constitution provides religious freedom is typically affirmed or taken for granted, and thereby attention is directed to how politics properly relates to the diversity religious freedom protects.

On virtually all academic proposals defining this relation, religions in the relevant sense at least include comprehensive human convictions, that is, convictions about human life as such and thus about the ultimate terms for evaluating human activities as such. The later work of John Rawls, for instance, includes religious convictions among what he calls comprehensive doctrines, which “in the limit” apply “to all subjects universally” and “to our life as a whole.”<sup>1</sup> Again, Jürgen Habermas accepts that a religion is a “totalizing . . . form of faith,” which a person “taps into performatively to nurture her whole life.”<sup>2</sup> For instance, the Christian religion asserts, as many have said, the so-called Great Commandment, prescribing love of God without reservation and of neighbor as oneself, as the proper basis for all evaluation of human activity—even if these ultimate terms must be interpreted and specified to differing situations. More generally, the view that religions include comprehensive convictions and thus such ultimate terms is, on my reading, uncontested in recent discussion of democracy with religious freedom.

I, too, will assume that religious convictions are at least among those “fully comprehensive,” in Rawls’s sense, or “totalizing,” in Habermas’s sense—and will so assume because I mean by “ultimate terms of evaluation” those

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<sup>1</sup> John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, expanded ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *Between Naturalism and Religion* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), 127.

a person implicitly or explicitly affirms as the basis for evaluating all human (including political) activities.<sup>3</sup> On the whole, perhaps, the recent discussion has called comprehensive convictions religious only when human life as such is defined by its relation to a transcendent reality, something beyond the contingent things of this world, and when I focus on this meaning, I will speak of religions in the conventional sense. In any event, a religion's political relevance consists in the ultimate terms of evaluation it provides because the political issue concerns a principle or principles for uniting a political community, notwithstanding a constitutional legitimation of whatever convictions about such terms religious freedom protects.

For many US citizens, past and present, religious freedom also includes a special right to exercise one's religious conviction, where this means that religious activities should not be substantially burdened by, and thus should be exempt from, laws of general applicability unless exemption is overruled through a compelling state interest test. The 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, passed by the US Congress and signed by President Clinton, expressly endorsed this reading of the US Constitution's free exercise clause and stipulated exemptions (at least from federal laws) accordingly. Based on that legislation, the US Supreme Court recently granted to Hobby Lobby and other "closely-held" corporations exemption from a particular insurance regulation stipulated by the 2010 Affordable Care Act. Although the merit of free exercise exemptions is controversial and the controversy complex, my principal purpose here is to discuss their relation to the meaning of religious freedom.

For reasons that will become apparent, however, the issue of such exemptions cannot be clarified without first marking the political significance of religious freedom. Accordingly, I will first propose that democracy so constituted is politics by the way of reason, that is, political decisions through full and free discourse among "we the people," together as equals, and thus among answers to the religious or comprehensive question in their pertinence to activities of the state.<sup>4</sup> But this initial proposal is only background for the analysis of free exercise exemptions—and given democracy so understood, I will then argue the following: if such exemptions are proper, they should be stipulated by statutory law rather than constitutional provision, and the activities so exempted are rightly limited to those prescribed by a given religious or comprehensive conviction only for its adherents, in

<sup>3</sup> On my accounting, even the view that people in differing historical contexts necessarily evaluate human activities in thoroughly differing ways, or that differing kinds of human activity are rightly evaluated in terms entirely specific to them, itself provides a set of terms applicable to all human activities.

<sup>4</sup> Because I have defended this account previously, the argument for it here will be relatively condensed, although I hope to say enough that my earlier presentations need not be consulted. The latter include Franklin I. Gamwell, *Politics as a Christian Vocation: Faith and Democracy Today* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), and *Religion among We the People: Conversations on Democracy and the Divine Good* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2015), chaps. 1–4.



distinction from prescriptions for citizens generally. These assertions are, I recognize, terse; I mean here merely to state summarily what the following discussion seeks to clarify and defend.

That discussion is also limited in the following way: these pages consider religious freedom, including the possibility of free exercise exemptions, theoretically or philosophically and thus do not intend an interpretation of US constitutional or statutory law. Although I will, when apparently helpful, make reference to US politics, this account will not interpret the religion clauses of our First Amendment or the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. Still, my discussion and US politics have the following in common: both claim to be democratic, and neither claim can be valid unless democracy with religious freedom makes sense. I will propose its coherence, but doing so is what requires the background argument for politics by the way of reason. Also, I recognize that democracy may depend on social and cultural preconditions (for instance, sufficient economic provision for citizens generally), and I will assume that such required circumstances, if there are any, obtain.

### I. RECENT THEORIES

On my reading, virtually all recent theories of democracy with religious freedom posit or assume the following: at least some comprehensive convictions are immune to public assessment; that is, their claims to validity cannot be (or cannot be fully) validated or invalidated by public reason or by argument. In the end, it is said, the warrant for any conviction of this kind can only be something historically specific—an authoritative person or event or tradition or, in some other way, a circumscribed context. Perhaps some theories confine such immunity to conventional religions (or some of them), even while including secularistic convictions within the class protected by a democratic constitution. Still, if any comprehensive conviction is beyond reasoned assessment, the entire class must be—and in most proposals is—so defined. This follows because democracy, all agree, constitutes government through public discussion and debate, and public reason cannot assess comprehensive convictions if the true one may be among those public reason cannot establish.<sup>5</sup>

Given this accounting, virtually all theories of democracy with religious freedom require an express constitutional separation of some or all politi-

<sup>5</sup> When that possibility is allowed, no such conviction can be rationally validated or invalidated: if any given one could be validated by public reason, all contrary others (including those supposedly immune to public reason) would thereby be proven false, and if any given one could be invalidated by public reason, the criterion for assessment would be rational. As far as I can see, in other words, the issue is whether or not comprehensive convictions answer a rational question, that is, a question answers to which can be rationally validated and invalidated. If the true answer might be nonrational or suprarational, the question itself must be nonrational or suprarational.

cal principles from the diversity in question.<sup>6</sup> In the measure such separation occurs, the convictions protected by religious freedom are privatized—and with the separation, virtually all these proposals endorse, to borrow an apt term from Rawls, an “overlapping consensus”<sup>7</sup> among comprehensive convictions on at least some principles of democratic justice. This reading of the theoretical discussion—namely, that virtually all proposals advance at least some principles of justice independent of any conviction protected by religious freedom—begs for extended defense. But I seek here briefly to present another proposal as background for attention to free exercise exemptions and thus will, in lieu of that defense, only assert how, on my readings, certain prominent thinkers illustrate this common pattern.

On John Courtney Murray’s interpretation, for instance, religious freedom protects only religious convictions in something like the conventional sense, and he then distinguishes the suprarational truth about eternity, which is available only through special revelation, from the natural law with which temporal affairs should be consistent and that is accessible to public reason. Hence, he separates political principles from religious convictions about our relation to eternity, even while all citizens can share an overlapping consensus on the natural law.<sup>8</sup> For the later Rawls, in contrast, religious freedom protects all “comprehensive doctrines,” some of which may be secularistic, but he isolates the political domain from them by an account of public reason (at least about the “basic structure”) that is “freestanding” because all citizens can join an overlapping consensus on the historically specific principles characterizing a modern democratic culture.<sup>9</sup> Habermas and Ronald Dworkin affirm universal principles of the right that are separated from any all-inclusive conception of the good, so that citizens can join an overlapping consensus on the priority of justice to such goods.<sup>10</sup>

Naturally, these asserted readings are, for some, misreadings. I assert them, however, only to provide context for this critical point: taking religious freedom to mean an express constitutional separation of any principles of justice from the convictions protected is incoherent. Because adherence to a religious or comprehensive conviction claims for it truth or

<sup>6</sup> On my intention, the constitution of democracy with religious freedom stipulates the conditions to which every citizen as a political participant should explicitly adhere because they constitute or define politics in the given community. These conditions are immunized against contestation because they constitute the form of political interaction within which discussion and debate occurs. Virtually all recent theories of democracy, then, assert or imply a constitution stipulating that justice is, at least in some respect, independent of any one or any specific type within the legitimized diversity of comprehensive convictions.

<sup>7</sup> Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, 134.

<sup>8</sup> See John Courtney Murray, SJ, *We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1960).

<sup>9</sup> See Rawls, *Political Liberalism*.

<sup>10</sup> See Habermas, *Naturalism and Religion*; and Ronald Dworkin, *Is Democracy Possible Here? Principles for a New Political Debate* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011).

validity, this adherence affirms that *all* principles of justice depend on that conviction; they could not otherwise be valid, and thus their derivation from some contrary conviction is, at least in some respects, fallacious. To claim truth for a prescription applicable to all human practice is to deny that prescriptions for any human practice can be independent thereof. Any such claim, in other words, contradicts dependence on an overlapping consensus because the latter requires adherents of a given comprehensive conviction also to claim truth for the following: some or all principles of justice do not depend on the given comprehensive conviction.

It is to the point, then, that political principles separated from any given such conviction also require adherents of it to assert that differences within the overlapping consensus make no difference to politics. Given Murray's account, for instance, opposition to, say, same-sex marriage that relies on some or other distinctively religious reasons (i.e., the opposition depends on one's suprarational beliefs about eternity) makes no difference to politics in competition with the contrary position on such marriages that relies on some or other differing religious conviction—so long as both religious views overlap on appeal to rational and universal principles, that is, to the natural law. Given Rawls's account, the same or similar disagreement about same-sex marriage makes no difference to politics—so long as both comprehensive doctrines overlap on historically specific or freestanding public reason. For Habermas and Dworkin, differences among views of same-sex marriage that rely on differing comprehensive conceptions of the good make no difference to politics, given only that citizens overlap on the priority of justice to these conceptions. In any of these or other cases, a conviction about the terms for strictly all evaluation that makes no difference to some given evaluation is an internally incoherent conviction—because any comprehensive conviction for which a claim to truth is made is thereby said to make all the difference in determining all principles of evaluation.<sup>11</sup> Hence, if religious free-

<sup>11</sup> Perhaps some find in Jeffrey Stout's proposal (see his *Democracy and Tradition* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004]) a relevant alternative to all of the above because it welcomes comprehensive convictions or "visions" into a secularized but not secularistic public discourse. On my reading, however, his account still separates some principles of justice from any such vision, all of which are said to be "final vocabularies," such that, in each case, public reason is limited to criticizing the internal consistency or inconsistency of beliefs none of which is necessary to human life. Thereby, the principles or "presuppositions" stipulated by a democratic constitution, on which differing religious or secularistic convictions must overlap, are separated from any given one or type thereof (see *Democracy and Tradition*, 184). Democracy is affirmed as a tradition independent of the visions it welcomes (and whatever traditions they involve). Accordingly, democracy is and must be posited as just, and that evaluation is separated from convictions about the ultimate terms of all evaluation. If Stout thereby endorses an exchange of internal criticism among contrary positions on, say, same-sex marriage, there can be no exchange of reasons about democracy itself and thus the application of its constitutional principles (for instance, the principle of equality in the exchange of reasons or the principle of equal protection of the laws) to that or other issues. I have sought to summarize and criticize Stout's proposal in Franklin I. Gamwell, *Existence and the Good: Metaphysical Necessity in Morals and Politics* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2011), chaps. 5 and 6.



dom requires the express constitutional separation of any such principles from the beliefs it supposedly protects, every comprehensive conviction is thereby delegitimized.

To be sure, pursuit of an “incompletely theorized”<sup>12</sup> consensus on some more or less specific political outcome, that is, an agreement diverse parties join for differing fundamental reasons, may often be a wise counsel to democratic citizens. The time and capacities of humans are limited, and special demands are involved if critical reflection turns to the most fundamental convictions. These facts are pertinent in politics, where often a common decision is required in the more or less short term. Given extensive and profound pluralism, citizens may be well advised in many situations of discourse to abstract from basic disagreements insofar as possible and to seek more specific values and purposes each takes to be authorized by her or his comprehensive conviction. But incompletely theorized agreement cannot be a successful theory of politics with religious freedom. Taking the wise counsel to constitute the democratic way simply presents another separation of political principles from the diversity of comprehensive convictions, whose adherents are then called to join an overlapping consensus.

### II. POLITICS BY THE WAY OF REASON

Some such separation of principles from convictions must be expressly provided, I have asserted, whenever an account asserts or assumes constitutional protection for at least some comprehensive convictions immune to validation or invalidation by public reason, such that warrant for any one of them can only be some historically specific authority or justification. If all such accounts are unsuccessful, democracy with religious freedom cannot be coherent unless that assertion or assumption is denied. I propose, then, that comprehensive convictions answer a rational question, that is, a question whose answers can be validated or invalidated in discourse. On this proposal, warrant for the true answer is not circumscribed by some special revelation or given tradition or context but, rather, includes thoroughly common human experience—although what is common to human experience may be understood only implicitly or inchoately, so that it may also be misinterpreted or denied.<sup>13</sup> Thereby, all humans have a common basis for assessment of comprehensive convictions by public reason.

<sup>12</sup> I borrow this term from Cass R. Sunstein. See his book *Legal Reasoning and Political Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> “Common human experience” does not mean a separate experience that occurs at some time or other in all or virtually all human lives (for instance, an experience of the sun) but, rather, an experience that occurs whenever anything else is experienced. What is common is, in Reinhold Niebuhr’s metaphor, “an overtone . . . in all experience” (Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 1 [New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1941–43], 127). That

With Rawls and others, a broad class of comprehensive beliefs is thereby constitutionally protected. The rational question asks for the character and ground of justice as such, and religious freedom, I propose, legitimizes all explicit convictions about the ultimate terms of evaluation—and thus the ultimate terms of political evaluation—and their ground. Any such conviction is legitimate in the sense that no citizen who decides for or adheres to it violates the constitution. On this proposal, the term “religious” in “religious freedom” should be understood in a broad or extended sense, such that it designates inclusively the class of explicit comprehensive convictions or what Rawls calls comprehensive doctrines.<sup>14</sup> They answer a rational question, then, because they assert for humans differing explications of the encompassing truth about self-conscious life, including its proper commitment or orientation in practice, that all humans implicitly understand. All humans are, we can say, after the same thing, namely, to exist authentically, that is, to live without duplicity in that encompassing truth of which all are at least inchoately aware. As explications, the convictions religious freedom protects are for humans putative re-presentations of this truth. Each seeks to present again the ultimate terms of evaluation and their authorizing ground that are implicitly present to all people, and any such re-presentation claims to be important as an aid to decisions consistent with human authenticity.

Because any such conviction may be in greater or lesser measure a misinterpretation of common human experience, the point of validation or invalidation in political discourse is to determine the true terms for all political evaluation so that each activity of the state may be consistent with them. Given that comprehensive convictions answer a rational question, moreover, religious freedom is essential to democracy, at least if the latter is constituted as popular sovereignty. “We the people” can be the final ruling power only if each citizen is sovereign over her or his evaluation of every po-

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such common experience is *human* means that all humans are implicitly aware of it or understand it; as Niebuhr writes, it “impinges upon” a “soul which reaches the outermost rims of its own consciousness” (*Nature and Destiny*, vol. 1, 127). Strictly speaking, I intend what is at least implicitly understood by all *adult* humans, and I do not contest that some aspects of such common human experience require learning. For instance, a human individual becomes and remains aware that her or his experiences depend on her or his own body and that she or he will die when this body dies only because, I expect, they are at some point learned—notwithstanding that these are ever-present aspects of each experience from our earliest days. Still, learned aspects of adult common human experience should be distinguished from those aspects understood, at least inchoately, whenever anything is understood—for instance, that the activity is aware of itself with others within the all-inclusive whole. On my belief, a moral law by which any decision with understanding is obligated is included within common human experience in this latter sense.

<sup>14</sup> On my reading, both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (and perhaps other US thinkers at the nation’s origin) thought of religion in the conventional sense and, nonetheless, included any citizen who did not affirm a conventional religion when they spoke of “religious liberty.” They might be excused for so speaking, moreover, because affirmation of a transcendent reality was more or less universal throughout the eighteenth-century United States.

litical claim; that is, she or he is free from any governmental stipulation with respect to political evaluation. Accordingly, each citizen must be free to endorse and advocate any ultimate terms of evaluation and their authorization she or he finds convincing—and thereby must be sovereign over her or his comprehensive conviction. All such convictions must be insofar legitimate.

Absent possible assessment of these convictions by public reason, in other words, popular sovereignty is impossible. If political contention at the most fundamental level of evaluation is immune to reasoned adjudication, conflict based on that disagreement cannot be civilized, since there is nothing more fundamental to which common appeal might be made. For conflicting parties, the only remaining alternatives are the accidental agreement of strategic aims (a *modus vivendi*) and force. In contrast, the potential for argumentative validation or invalidation of the most fundamental terms for evaluation allows “we the people,” each of whom is sovereign over her or his assessment of every political claim, to unite as equals in a full and free political discourse. Public reason is then defined by the comprehensive question in its pertinence to activities of the state—or, again, democratic government is constituted by the way of reason.<sup>15</sup>

Some may object that certain answers to this question, perhaps found especially among conventional religions, claim to transcend rational assessment, and thus the way of reason is in truth an alien imposition on adherents of those convictions, contradicting their legitimation. As discussed earlier, many democratic theories credit the claim and thus separate some or all principles of justice from whatever religious freedom is said to protect. But whether the way of reason is an alien imposition depends entirely on whether the question comprehensive convictions answer is or is not rational. The issue is not whether some answers *claim* to be validated by authority or tradition or specific context but, rather, whether they can be assessed in public discourse. If so, every citizen who claims truth for her or his religious or comprehensive conviction thereby pledges its redemption by reason, and the constitution imposes nothing on any citizen she or he does not self-impose in making the claim politically.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> For some, perhaps, one or more of the thinkers previously reviewed (Murray, Rawls, etc.) intends his theory as a contribution to full and free discourse about justice. But this cannot consistently be the case. As noted above, each in its own way (and, on my reading, virtually every recent theory), takes at least some religious or comprehensive convictions to be immune to public assessment and, accordingly, must so define the entire class (see n. 5 above). In other words, each theory asserts, at least by implication, that the comprehensive question is *not* rational. Accordingly, each denies that comprehensive convictions can be objects of public debate—and, thereby, must assert an express constitutional separation of justice, at least in some respect, from the convictions constitutionally protected by religious freedom.

<sup>16</sup> If the comprehensive question is rational, in other words, claiming truth for one’s answer politically is relevantly analogous to making a promise. In each case, a person decides to join a social practice defined by its norm. Promising is a pledge to keep one’s promise, and if the content promised is an action one cannot perform, one’s act is pragmatically



If the relevant question is rational, constitutional provision for religious freedom is, we can say, itself religiously free, explicitly neutral to all comprehensive convictions because its stipulation is authorized by the pledge given politically when one claims truth for any answer. The way of reason, then, excludes no such conviction unless the comprehensive question is not rational. In that event, all answers are delegitimized because no answer can be assessed in public discourse, and government by “we the people” is, as mentioned, impossible. I will henceforth assume and thus not further defend the democratic possibility. Nonetheless, convictions on which ultimate terms of evaluation require some truth reason cannot establish are included within the class legitimized by a democratic constitution, and those who so believe are invited to argue for their claim, even if no argument of that kind can be successful.

Further, the way of reason protects comprehensive convictions on which popular sovereignty is said to be immoral or unjust. A democratic constitution requires that members of “we the people” adhere to it only in the following sense: they are to act in accord with, as distinct from endorse or profess, full and free political discourse. Hence, whether democracy can be vindicated and should be maintained are themselves questions to which “we the people” may seek the right answer and decide accordingly. In other words, constitutional stipulation that democracy accords with justice would contradict religious freedom, which grants to every citizen sovereignty over her or his assessment of every political claim, including a claim for “democracy is a just form of politics.” Indeed, were that governmental form itself immunized against contestation, the political discourse could not establish what answer to the comprehensive question is true. The constitution would then confine comprehensive convictions to those consistent with democracy, but a discourse among those holding a specific class of such beliefs cannot establish which one is true unless it can establish that a true belief is within that class. Consider a discourse about which Kantian moral theory is true that cannot ask whether the true moral theory is Kantian.<sup>17</sup> If popular sovereignty seeks the true ultimate terms of political evaluation, all possible answers to the comprehensive question must be insofar legitimate.<sup>18</sup>

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self-contradictory. Given a democratic community, claiming truth for one’s comprehensive conviction politically pledges its redemption in full and free political discourse—pledges, in other words, that it can be so redeemed, irrespective of whether the person making the claim can herself or himself provide the argument—and if the conviction includes its authoritative or solely contextual validation, one’s act is pragmatically self-contradictory.

<sup>17</sup> Indeed, this discourse could not even establish which Kantian moral theory is best because better and worse Kantian theories could be defined only in terms of the truth about our moral obligations.

<sup>18</sup> I am fond of some words from Thomas Jefferson’s First Inaugural: “If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments to the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it” (Thomas Jefferson, *Political Writings*, ed. Joyce Appelby

To be sure, a democratic constitution *implies* that democracy accords with justice, even as it also implies that comprehensive convictions answer a rational question. But these implications cannot be constitutionally stipulated because, if they were, they could not be contested within the full and free political discourse. To the best of my reasoning, then, the constitution of popular sovereignty properly stipulates no more and no less than (1) the rights that belong to each member of a political community as a potential and sometimes actual participant in discourse among “we the people,” and (2) the institutions and associated practices of a decision-making procedure, so designed that the discourse maximally informs governing activities. So understood, a democratic constitution is, I will say, properly formative in character; that is, citizens as political participants can explicitly adhere to its prescriptions without professing them and thus without thereby taking sides in any possible political disagreement, including disagreement about whether the constitutional prescriptions themselves are morally valid.<sup>19</sup> As far as I can see, the one commitment explicitly neutral to any political disagreement, even disagreement about whether democracy accords with justice, is the commitment to debate or argument as the way to validate political claims. Thus, the rights of all citizens to equal membership in “we the people” and thus to freedom of speech and equal protection of the laws are properly included (although they do not exhaust) the rights stipulated by a formative constitution.<sup>20</sup>

So understood, formative prescriptions are distinguished from substantive principles, laws, and policies for the political order, that is, prescriptions to which no citizen as a political participant can adhere without professing and thus explicitly taking sides in some possible political disagreement. A

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and Terrance Ball [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 174). These words echoed the singular formulation in his Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom in Virginia: “truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; . . . she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate” (*Political Writings*, 391).

<sup>19</sup> A democratic constitution must stipulate the institutions and associated practices of a decision-making procedure because the full and free discourse established is *political*, that is, constituted to determine the governing activities. Given stipulations through which decisions are maximally informed by the discourse, the procedure is formative: citizens can adhere to its prescriptions without explicitly taking sides in any political disagreement, including disagreement about those prescriptions. One may adhere to the decision-making procedure even while one contests its merit and seeks its revision because participation in a formative procedure is entirely consistent in seeking through it a decision to alter that very procedure.

<sup>20</sup> A formative constitution is, we can say, self-democratizing; it prescribes an ethics of citizenship to which “we the people” can adhere without professing and is ordained by them because it preserves their sovereignty. In a cryptic statement about what he called the American and, by implication, constitutional consensus, John Courtney Murray once wrote: “We hold certain truths; therefore we can argue about them” (*We Hold These Truths*, 10). Whatever Murray himself may have meant or may have included within such truths, something very like that statement can be crafted to capture the formative character of a properly democratic constitution, namely: “we adhere to this constitution, therefore we can argue about it.”

substantive law, in other words, stipulates something other than commitment to full and free discourse as the way to validate political claims. For instance, a prohibition on manufacture, sale, and transportation of intoxicating liquors or a law restricting marriage to heterosexual couples is a substantive prescription. Adherence to either as a political participant is a profession of it and thus takes sides against those for whom it is unjust. Hence, neither should be constitutionally prescribed because, if it were, all political participants would be required to profess it, in contradiction to the sovereignty of each over her or his conviction about the ultimate terms of political evaluation. This contradiction becomes the more apparent, perhaps, if the constitution stipulates a religious or comprehensive conviction.<sup>21</sup>

To the contrary, then, religious freedom requires that substantive laws and policies should never be constitutionally provided and ought always to be statutory. To be sure, the obligations of citizens include (setting aside here the possibility of civil disobedience or rebellion) adherence to substantive laws and policies—but never as political participants. Citizens within the full and free political discourse are never bound to profess any such law or policy. Accordingly, statutory law should be constitutionally prohibited from teaching or supporting the teaching that any comprehensive conviction is true or is false because such activity would stipulate something about the ultimate terms of justice and, thereby, obligate citizens as political participants. It also follows that substantive laws should be limited to nonpolitical activity. They may regulate economic interaction, provide for education, require support for the state, relate the society to other societies, and so forth. But this legislated order of action and association may never expressly prescribe or proscribe any political evaluation.<sup>22</sup> In so doing, the government would violate the right of each citizen to assess all political claims. Summarily stated, then, religious freedom requires that substantive laws be statutory, noncomprehensive, and nonpolitical. Otherwise government, which is responsible to “we the people,” would insofar stipulate their assessment of it.

On this account, no principle of justice, constitutional or otherwise, is separated from what is legitimized by religious freedom. To the contrary, the entire point of full and free political discourse is to clarify the true comprehensive conviction that authorizes both constitutional provisions and governmental activities. If we assume democracy’s vindication, moreover,

<sup>21</sup> To be sure, all political prescriptions are, on another use of the term, “substantive,” in the sense that each prescribes something contrary to its denials and thus can be acted against. But that use of “substantive” then requires, at least on the account I seek to commend, a distinction between formative and nonformative such prescriptions, that is, between political prescriptions to which political participants can adhere without professing and those to which political participants cannot adhere without professing. I here propose so to use terms that only nonformative political prescriptions are substantive.

<sup>22</sup> The state may never, for instance, proscribe criticism of Congress, as in the US Sedition Act of 1798, or criticism of the government during war, as in the US Sedition Act of 1918.



we can say that every citizen has a formative right to substantive justice, although the character of substantive justice cannot be constitutionally provided. The enduring full and free discourse seeks to mark the truth about ultimate terms of political evaluation in order that each substantive political decision may be consistent with them even while no such decision violates formative constitutional principles. Every democratic decision, then, will imply some or other ultimate terms of evaluation, and when the discourse has been successful, these will include the true conception of justice as such.

But if governing activities always imply some or other comprehensive conviction, this does not prevent them from being *explicitly* neutral to everything protected by religious freedom. Explicit neutrality is precisely the sense in which the pledge to argumentative assessment is the one commitment that does not take sides in any political disagreement. Moreover, explicit neutrality is what religious freedom must mean if the point of government by the people is to exemplify in laws and policies the true ultimate terms of evaluation and thus the character of justice as such. It then follows that explicit claims to truth for some or other understanding of those terms belong only within the discussion and debate among “we the people”—and this is just to repeat that substantive governmental prescriptions should never include teaching that any comprehensive conviction is true or is false and thus never prescribe or proscribe any political evaluation.

### III. FREE EXERCISE EXEMPTIONS

Reading through the way of reason the terse opening of the First Amendment to the US Constitution—“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof”—one might see in the previous discussion a long gloss on the first or nonestablishment clause, with the understanding that “religion” designates any comprehensive conviction and the ultimate terms of political evaluation it includes. Once this extended meaning of “religion” is in place, however, the foregoing might be seen to gloss the two clauses together. This could follow because “religion” and “religious” are so often assumed to designate in the conventional sense, as they doubtless did for framers and ratifiers of the First Amendment. If religious establishment in that sense is excluded by the first clause, it would, taken by itself, permit the state to teach or support the teaching of some nonreligious or secularistic comprehensive conviction. The free exercise clause, then, denies such permission by stipulating that religion is legitimate. Given the conventional meaning of “religion,” in other words, the two clauses together, if read through the way of reason, prohibit the establishment of any comprehensive conviction and thus constitute the sovereignty of the people.

In US history, however, many have seen another meaning in the free exercise clause, namely, that religious activities cannot be substantially bur-

dened by laws of general applicability unless so required by a compelling state interest that cannot be served in a less restrictive way. A free exercise claim in this sense was considered by the US Supreme Court in *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith*,<sup>23</sup> which concerned the ritual use of peyote, a drug prohibited by the State of Oregon, by employees of that state in their Native American Church. Without invoking a compelling governmental interest, the Court denied the claim, finding that a state may accommodate religious practice contrary to generally applicable statutes but has no constitutional obligation to do so. Subsequently and in response, Congress passed and President Clinton signed, as mentioned earlier, the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which stipulated free exercise exemptions (at least from federal law) under the conditions noted above—and based on this legislation, the Supreme Court, in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*,<sup>24</sup> granted an exemption to the owners of Hobby Lobby and other “closely-held” corporations from a certain requirement of the 2010 Affordable Care Act because those owners objected on religious grounds to certain contraceptive methods. In the Court’s ruling, the government ignored a less restrictive way to realize its interest (compelling or not) in providing contraceptive coverage for relevant women employees.

If democracy with religious freedom is incoherent except as government through full and free discourse, current debates about how generally applicable laws relate to religious activities counsel attention to what the way of reason implies for this issue. The matter is complicated because, as recent US discussion confirms, questions of free exercise exemptions may be asked about either constitutional or statutory law, and the way of reason may imply differing conclusions depending on which kind of law is in question. At the outset, however, one implication is clear: any exemption from generally applicable laws properly given to activities protected by religious freedom must apply to all convictions about the ultimate terms of evaluation. Were the exemption reserved for conventionally religious convictions, the state would take sides among answers to the comprehensive question, teaching that some answers merit special privileges, and thereby would violate the neutrality it must evidence in order that all members of “we the people” may be together as equals in the democratic discourse. Denying free exercise exemptions to secularistic convictions is, as Justice John Paul Stevens rightly said during a concurring opinion in *Boerne v. Flores*, “a ‘law respecting the establishment of religion’ that violates the First Amendment” because religious belief is thereby given “a legal weapon no atheist or agnostic can obtain.”<sup>25</sup>

Given that religious freedom implies the way of reason, I doubt that a constitutional provision for free exercise exemptions is permitted. As noted

<sup>23</sup> *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources of Oregon v. Smith* 494 U.S. 872 (1990).

<sup>24</sup> *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.* 573 U.S. \_\_\_\_ (2014).

<sup>25</sup> *Boerne v. Flores* 507 U.S. (1977) at 536–37.

earlier, however, a widely held interpretation of the US Constitution asserts to the contrary, and that fact commends asking whether any consideration, consistent with the way of reason, might support the provision. Its most compelling defense, as far as I can see, is this: protection for free exercise exemptions is implied by religious freedom and thus by popular sovereignty. If “we the people” are the final ruling power, freedom to choose ultimate terms of evaluation for the sake of public advocacy and assessment is useless absent a citizen’s further opportunity to cultivate the orientation she or he has elected—and to do so in a way that informs more or less specific political evaluations.

In the present context, I use “cultivation” to mean the process through which one masters a comprehensive conviction—that is, increasingly attests, embodies, and becomes practically competent in relation to it. Such cultivation is, at least typically, a requisite preparation for participation in public discourse and hence for the generally applicable laws consequent on it. Moreover, the argument continues, this process of cultivation requires activities, typically within a community of like-minded people, through regular engagement in which each adherent more thoroughly believes or enacts the conviction and, thereby, becomes proficient in living and judging accordingly. Thus, the constitutional provision for religious freedom implies a corresponding freedom to cultivate comprehensive convictions.

Something like this implication, I mean to say, offers the strongest basis for why free exercise exemptions should be constitutionally provided. Still, whatever force the reasoning has does not, I think, warrant the conclusion. Religious freedom, on which the supposed provision depends, means that democracy’s constitution should be entirely formative or should be explicitly neutral to all possible political disagreement, even disagreement about the justice of democracy as a form of political community. Only thereby is popular sovereignty constituted. Hence, constitutional provisions define a democratic ethic of citizenship no political participant is required to profess, even if all political participants should act in accord with it. The affirmation of free exercise exemptions constitutionally does not, to the best of my understanding, conform to this formative understanding, as I will now try to explain.

Because implied by democracy with religious freedom, a constitutional provision for such exemptions makes sense only given an explicit constitutional endorsement of democracy. But democracy itself cannot be vindicated by the democratic constitution. To the contrary, the latter stipulates a full and free discourse inclusive of citizens who advocate monarchical or aristocratic or, more generally, nondemocratic forms of government. In other words, constitutional provision for free exercise exemptions would depend on a substantive constitutional stipulation, namely, that democracy accords with justice, thereby requiring all citizens to profess it or take sides in a pos-



sible political disagreement, namely, about whether popular sovereignty is morally valid, and the formative criterion would be violated.<sup>26</sup>

It then follows that constitutional provision for the exemptions in question would also require all citizens to profess that very provision. If the constitution explicitly endorses democracy, any other constitutional provision dependent on that endorsement would also be substantive and could only be professed. Given a constitutional provision for free exercise exemptions, then, the ethics of citizenship would include taking sides against, say, democratic Kantians for whom the priority of morality and justice to ideals of the good life is unqualified. More widely, adherence to that provision would disagree with any citizen for whom generally applicable statutes, having constitutionally legitimate purposes approved by the people or their elected officials, should be obeyed by all members of the community, even if those laws have unfortunate but unintended effects on the cultivation of certain comprehensive convictions. Dissent from a constitutional provision for free exercise exemptions would, in other words, be illegitimate, and determination of its justice or injustice would not be accountable to the people.

Moreover, the supposed right to cultivate one's comprehensive conviction points toward a more general substantive issue in democratic politics. For many thinkers, equal membership in "we the people" is hollow or worthless unless citizens have the capacities needed to be active within the political process—and, plausibly, those capacities require not only cultivation of one's comprehensive conviction but also a certain measure of other economic and social resources, including education. Given that something like this argument is sound, it follows that a democratic constitution implies whatever political support is needed to ensure for all the worth of their citizenship. Accordingly, some have proposed that rights to these capacities or what they require should be stipulated constitutionally.

But what substantive conditions democratic participation requires is open to political disagreement within the discourse, even among citizens who are patriotic, that is, who do profess democracy—with convictions ranging from severely libertarian to severely socialist ones. Accordingly, a formative constitution cannot properly stipulate for all citizens any relevant such conditions, including the freedom to cultivate one's comprehensive conviction. As mentioned above, citizens have a formative right to substantive justice,

<sup>26</sup> This consideration is, I now think, sufficient to refute an argument for constitutional free exercise exemptions I proposed in an earlier work, namely, that special protection for the cultivation of comprehensive convictions is warranted as an aspect of a realistic decision-making procedure (see Franklin I. Gamwell, *The Meaning of Religious Freedom: Modern Politics and the Democratic Resolution* [Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995], 155–57). If adherence to a constitutional provision for free exercise exemptions requires an explicit constitutional endorsement of democracy, that provision cannot be explicitly neutral to comprehensive convictions that include or imply a nondemocratic constitution and thus cannot be a formative constitutional provision.

but the character of substantive justice should not be defined by the constitution. To be sure, its own moral authorization is implied by a formative constitution, but it can only *anticipate* that full and free political discourse will continually vindicate popular sovereignty itself and will, at least in sufficient measure, result in laws prescribing for all citizens whatever substantive conditions equality in the political process requires. If government is indeed “by the people,” everything depends on the people.

Reading the US Constitution through this account of religious freedom leads one to agree with the decision in *Employment Division v. Smith*: the First Amendment does not provide a right to free exercise exemptions from generally applicable laws.<sup>27</sup> The above arguments for excluding such exemptions from a formative constitution may, I recognize, seem flawed or at least recondite. Even if the reasoning is sound, however, its conclusion leaves entirely open whether exemptions for the relevant activities, consistent with a compelling state interest test, should be provided by statutory law. Citizens as political participants are not bound to profess a substantive statutory law; to the contrary, its merit is subject to their ongoing evaluation of it in the political discourse. I have in mind here not only specific exemptions provided by some or other specific law, such as release for conscientious objection from a law mandating military conscription, but also a statute prescribing nonspecific free exercise exemptions, such as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and a law stipulating a nonspecific right of this kind is the focus of the following discussion.<sup>28</sup> That law might be enacted because “we the people” are persuaded that one’s constitutional right to choose a comprehensive conviction implies the right to cultivate it. I will not seek to assess whether a law of that kind is convincing. In fact, however, statutes stipulating this right do exist in the United States, and their presence raises another question, which remains even for those who defend a constitutional rather than statutory provision of these exemptions: if religious activities that pass the compelling state interest test should not be substantially burdened by generally applicable laws, what activities are thereby exempted?

These activities cannot be just any prescribed by a comprehensive conviction because it provides terms for evaluating all human activities; to prescribe comprehensively is to deny that prescriptions for any human activity can be independent thereof.<sup>29</sup> If all politically relevant prescriptions de-

<sup>27</sup> Whether Justice Antonin Scalia’s opinion for the Court should be credited as an interpretation of US constitutional law is, naturally, another question.

<sup>28</sup> Because exemptions stated by a specific law should apply to any comprehensive conviction, reading statutory law through the account of religious freedom proposed earlier implies agreement with the US Supreme Court decision in *United States v. Seeger* (30 U.S. 163 [1965]) finding the exemption within the Universal Military and Service Act of 1948 applicable to Daniel Andrew Seeger, who was an atheist.

<sup>29</sup> On my intention, a specific activity is *prescribed* by a comprehensive conviction whenever obligation to engage in that activity specifies the conviction to a particular situation. Given

pendent on a conviction protected by religious freedom were grounds for a free exercise claim, any citizen whose comprehensive conviction prescribes contrary to any generally applicable law could indeed claim exemption from it, at least if she or he takes the law's burden on that conviction to be substantial. Given that something like the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is so interpreted, in other words, any given statute save those in pursuit of some compelling state interest could be inapplicable to citizens who dissent from that law.<sup>30</sup> If religious freedom implies the way of reason, however, the sovereignty of each citizen over the ultimate terms of evaluation is legitimized in order that generally applicable laws may be determined through a full and free political discourse and thus may, insofar as possible, be consistent with the true comprehensive conviction—and this constitution would be betrayed if each law applies only to citizens who, the compelling state interest test aside, agree with the given statute, or, at least, do not consider their comprehensive convictions substantially burdened by it. In contrast, a democratic constitution provides a different direction for dissent. Absent a basic constitutional change, popular sovereignty allows the ruled to be rulers, such that any who contest a given law are not required as political participants to profess it. Their membership in “we the people” is protected, and through the democratic process they may seek the law's repeal. Hence, providing by statute a right to free exercise exemptions cannot be consistent with democratic politics unless the relevant activities are in some way circumscribed.

Thus, the question returns: what activities might a statute stipulating that right exempt from generally applicable laws? We may approach an answer by recurring to the public assessment of comprehensive convictions. As previously discussed, democracy is possible because citizens, each of whom is sovereign over her or his evaluation of every political claim, have a common basis for assessment of their comprehensive differences, namely, their common human experience. Religious freedom protects differing explications of that experience, each of which seeks to re-present the encompassing truth of which all humans are already aware, and true explications are important because they aid decision in accord with the encompassing truth about human life.

This account, we should now add, implies that such decisions are of two kinds. On the one hand, we humans take within the particular circumstances

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the conviction and whatever is understood by its adherents to be specific to that situation, the activity is obligatory for people in that situation.

<sup>30</sup> Writing for the Court in the Smith decision, Justice Scalia advanced a similar argument (although he may have confined the meaning of “religion” to conventional religions). “Any society adopting such a system would be courting anarchy,” he wrote—and in any event, the contemporary United States “cannot afford the luxury of deeming *presumptively invalid*, as applied to the religious objector, every regulation of conduct that does not protect an interest of the highest order [that is, a compelling state interest].” See *Employment Division v. Smith* at 888–89; the citations are from 888.



of our particular lives more or less specific decisions based on more or less specific understandings of the good—choices occurring in relation to private life or more intimate relationships or larger associational patterns—and each explication of human authenticity includes a conception of the good that is meant to aid deliberations about all such decisions. On the other hand, each specific decision occurs through another at the innermost or implicit level of one's life with understanding, an encompassing decision for or against the authenticity of which we are always aware, and each explication of human authenticity is meant to aid this innermost choice. These two kinds of decisions are inseparable because they influence each other. Choice for or against the encompassing truth affects the evaluation of specific alternatives, and specific decisions affect the decision about encompassing worth.<sup>31</sup>

That innermost decision to live in or against the encompassing truth is, we may say, for a person's comprehensive self-understanding, and the explication of a comprehensive conviction may include prescribed activities meant to aid that decision by mediating the given account of living in the truth. When activities of this kind occur, the explication typically takes the form of mediating symbols, including symbolic practices—and attention to or engagement in such expressions is prescribed in order to help evoke or persuade comprehensive self-understandings in accord with the given conviction. Toward clarifying this point, it will be useful to distinguish the content of a comprehensive conviction from the particular cultural formation of signs and symbols (i.e., the language, including its metaphors and images, and the symbolic practices) with which a given individual or group explicates its conviction about human authenticity. I will reserve the term "comprehensive conviction" for the content of any such supposed representation of the encompassing truth and thus for what claims to be rightly affirmed by all humans. On this usage, in other words, two or more individuals or associations that participate in differing cultural formations may nonetheless affirm the same comprehensive conviction. In contrast, I will speak of a "comprehensive confession" when I mean the particular cultural formation that marks how a comprehensive conviction is re-presented by a given individual or group.

Religious freedom, then, which legitimizes all comprehensive convictions, protects all comprehensive confessions, and the moral and political prescriptions authorized by a conviction are also authorized by any confession of it—so that, with respect to political laws and policies, the difference between the two is inconsequential. Still, individuals and groups may adhere to their comprehensive confession because its cultural formation is given by or derives from a particular person or historical context taken to be a decisive disclosure of the encompassing truth about human life. Moreover, the difference between a comprehensive conviction and its confession is important

<sup>31</sup> I have discussed this inseparability in Gamwell, *Existence and the Good*, 107–15.

because mediating symbols, including symbolic practices, belong to a confession. The confession and its mediating expressions are inseparable because the expressions are born with what is taken to be the decisive disclosure.

The purpose of attention to or engagement in mediating expressions is, I will say, a confession's direct—rather than indirect—cultivation. When the distinct activity prescribed by a given such confession is for its mediation (or is necessary to such mediation), the cultivation is direct; for instance, the worship of a religious community (or as necessary thereto, the provision of a place where the community gathers for worship and the teaching that enhances understanding of what worship mediates) directly cultivates the confession. When the distinct activity prescribed by the confession is for something else, the cultivation is indirect; for instance, the advocacy of political laws and policies prescribed by the confession indirectly cultivates it. Hence activities of direct and indirect cultivation may be distinguished as those whose distinct purpose is, on the one hand, to aid decision for a comprehensive self-understanding and, on the other, to aid some or other specific decision—even if that specific decision is about what explication of human authenticity to affirm (as, for instance, when discourse asks about the true comprehensive conviction or when one is deciding in what community of worship to participate). Moreover, the concept of direct cultivation provides the limitation on activities for which free exercise exemptions might properly be claimed—as I will now seek to clarify.

Given the way of reason, the symbols, including symbolic practices, through which an individual or association cultivates directly a comprehensive conviction is not the same as the conviction thereby given mediating expression. Mediating expressions are one thing, the conviction about human authenticity thereby mediated is something else. The conviction claims to explicate the truth present in common human experience and thus to prescribe (or to authorize prescriptions) for all members of the political community. Mediating expressions are dependent on some particular person or historical context—and accordingly, the relevant prescriptions for adherents of the confession need not make or imply any such universal claim. For instance, the activities of baptism and the Eucharist prescribed for Christians are mediating practices born with the response to Jesus and may be distinguished from the conviction about ultimate purpose and thus the ultimate terms of evaluation mediated through the Christian confession—and that conviction can be publicly explained and advocated without essential reference to those activities.

Accordingly, those who cultivate directly a given comprehensive confession have reason to allow that another individual or association of citizens may directly cultivate the same conviction through symbols dependent on some other historical context—and no such expressions can rightly claim to be indispensable for mediating a true account of human authenticity. Direct cultivation, in other words, permits adherents of a given confession

to distinguish prescriptions for their own mediation from the conviction about human authenticity they claim to be prescribed (or to authorize prescriptions) for all humans. If Christians, to focus further on this example, claim truth for what is disclosed in Jesus as the Christ and mediate this understanding through participation in Christian worship and other activities dependent on the response to him, common human experience of the encompassing truth allows recognition that others may mediate the same conviction through expressions dependent on a differing historical context, so that activities prescribed by Christianity for the sake of direct cultivation cannot rightly claim exclusivity. Even if the Christian conviction about human authenticity is true, therefore, Christians have reason to distinguish activities through which they mediate that conviction from their advocacy of laws and policies for the political community prescribed by their religion and through which activities it is indirectly cultivated.

Democracy has an interest in the mediation of comprehensive confessions whenever adherents of any given one allow that other confessions may directly cultivate the same account of human authenticity, because this proviso at least implies that every comprehensive conviction is open to validation or invalidation by reasons appealing to common human experience. With the proviso, we can say, the claim to truth for the conviction a given comprehensive confession mediates occurs with a religious or comprehensive reservation, that is, an affirmation of fallibility and, therefore, a pledge to public assessment. In contrast, any citizen whose claim to truth for her or his religious or comprehensive conviction appeals solely to some specific authority and thus to some historical disclosure denies common human experience of authenticity and thus denies the possibility of public assessment. Thereby, this citizen implies that no human has access to the encompassing truth except through the same historical context—so that all direct cultivation of that truth occurs only through the same mediating expressions.

Here, then, is a proposal for the activities that might be exempted from generally applicable laws: because dissent, even conscientious dissent, is not proper grounds for exemptions from a legitimate enactment, the relevant activities are those through which adherents of a given comprehensive confession directly cultivate it. Such mediating activities may be distinguished from political advocacy as follows: when a given comprehensive confession prescribes only for its adherents (as may occur, for instance, with a prescription for worship in a religious community or for what is necessary thereto), the prescribed activity is a candidate for a free exercise exemption; when a given comprehensive confession prescribes laws or policies for the political community, the advocacy of them is not a candidate for a free exercise exemption.

Or again, we may summarize the distinction this way: candidate activities cannot include those whose distinct purpose is to contest or express opposition to the law from which one seeks an exemption—and this precisely



because candidate activities are those prescribed only for adherents of the confession in question. To be sure, these adherents cultivate living and judging in accord with their confession when they advocate its prescribed political laws and policies. But doing so indirectly cultivates the confession—as one can see because such advocacy prescribes for all citizens. This proposal, then, accords with the following intuitive recognition: A claim to exemption from some generally applicable law does not disagree with the law in question; to the contrary, general applicability is otherwise accepted. In contrast, opposition to a democratically determined statute contests the law's validity. To immediate appearances, therefore, claims to free exercise exemptions make sense only if the candidate activities do not express dissent from the law.

On the assumption that a relevant statute is applicable and the activity in question passes the compelling interest test, use of peyote in worship ceremonies or the drinking of wine in certain eucharistic celebrations or a certain personal appearance in the military or in prison might be exempt from generally applicable laws or legal policies prohibiting such activities—if in each case the activity is prescribed only for those who confess this form of mediation. Perhaps such direct cultivation is likely found for the most part in some conventionally religious communities, and if so, we should repeat that any free exercise statute should provide exemptions for any explicit conviction about the ultimate terms of evaluation.<sup>32</sup> In contrast, opposing or advocating political laws or policies because one's comprehensive conviction so prescribes cannot be relevant to release from generally applicable laws—because these prescriptions are not limited to adherents of that confession. If a statute endorsing free exercise exemptions is valid, they are meant, given the way of reason, to enhance cultivation for public advocacy, not as compensation when one's advocacy does not prevail.

In *Employment Division v. Smith*, Justice Antonin Scalia's decision for the Court dismissed the notion that a right to free exercise exemption should apply only when a given activity is "central" to a given religious belief—because that criterion would, he argued, inappropriately require judges to determine what religious activities are central to the given religion.<sup>33</sup> With that conclusion, Justice Sandra O'Connor, in her concurring opinion, agreed.<sup>34</sup> On these grounds, if I understand correctly, the Court has rightly refused to decide whether a given religion has been substantially burdened. The

<sup>32</sup> For instance, a communist organization, persuaded that conventional religion is the "opium of the people" and thus inimical to pursuit of a classless society, might decide to begin its meetings with the ritual destruction of opium and, therefore, claim exemption from drug laws prohibiting its possession. All claims for such exemptions are, to be repetitious, subject to the compelling state interest test, and even then, a nonspecific right to free exercise exemptions may be politically contentious.

<sup>33</sup> See *Employment Division, Department of Human Resources v. Smith* 494 U.S. at 886–87.

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at 906–7.

difference here stated between direct and indirect cultivation, let us underscore, does not require any judge to decide whether activities purporting to be exempt are of one kind or another. To the contrary, the claimants themselves are required to draw the distinction. On their own account, the distinct activity for which they seek an exemption must be prescribed only for adherents of the comprehensive confession in question and, therefore, must not contest or express opposition to the generally applicable law. Accordingly, any citizens who successfully claim a free exercise exemption will at least imply the difference between mediating expression and public advocacy of their conviction. Their claims will have merit, in other words, only because the direct cultivation for which they seek an exemption includes mediation of a religious or comprehensive reservation.

Against this accounting, some may argue, a given confession legitimized by religious freedom could insist that advocacy of certain clearly political prescriptions functions directly to cultivate that confession. This is so, the objection holds, when a given political advocacy is said to be entailed by, and thus a tenet of how, human authenticity is expressed. So-called peace churches, for instance, may take complete pacifism or, at least, opposition to all wars between or among nations to be itself a religious tenet, an aspect of God's abiding will. Similarly, opposition to abortion may be for some religious adherents a distinctively religious belief. When affirmed in this way, the objection explains, the advocacy belongs to the religious confession itself and thus directly cultivates it. Accordingly, the argument concludes, the activity cannot be excluded from those relevant to free exercise claims.

This argument is unconvincing. If opposition to, say, a declaration of war or legal permission for abortion is called a distinctively religious belief, this dissent from the law may entail a claim against the state—but not for exemption from a generally applicable law. The relevant claim indicts the government for a supposed violation of nonestablishment, that is, of explicit neutrality toward all comprehensive convictions. On this claim, in other words, the very applicability of the law is denied because the law is said to be unconstitutional, having taught, say, that pacifism or opposition to abortion as a religious tenet is false. But that indictment, too, is unconvincing. If religious freedom legitimizes any ultimate terms of political evaluation a citizen elects, the state cannot teach anything about true and false such beliefs without restricting full and free discourse by somehow stipulating an evaluation citizens as political participants should profess. Absent such teaching, the law is, in truth, explicitly neutral to all comprehensive convictions and confessions. A statutory declaration of war or statute permitting abortion does not stipulate a political evaluation but, rather, leaves all citizens, including the religious adherents in question, free to contest every political claim in public discourse.

Hence, a generally applicable statute said by some to contravene a religious tenet may imply, but does not teach, its falsity. Given the way of rea-

son, in other words, the establishment issue is not whether certain religions *claim* a violation of religious freedom but whether the law, in truth, fails to be noncomprehensive because it explicitly asserts or teaches something about ultimate terms of political evaluation—and the relevant test is whether an enactment restricts full and free political discourse. Still, nothing said here denies that religious freedom legitimizes and invites into the continuing political discourse any political prescriptions taken by their adherents to be tenets of their religious or comprehensive confessions.

Religious freedom also legitimizes any comprehensive confession whose prescribed activities that clearly and directly cultivate it are, at least by implication, also prescribed for all in the political community; that is, the symbolic mediation is said to be necessary for access to the ultimate terms of evaluation. That appears to be the point, for instance, whenever Christians deny salvation “outside the church.” But a claim to exclusivity for some direct cultivation of a comprehensive confession is, at least by implication, a denial of popular sovereignty or democracy with religious freedom, precisely because a common human experience of authenticity is denied. This claim to exclusivity, in other words, implies a form of government consistent with the constitutional establishment of that confession. Although its adherents are free to argue for it, their claim can only mean that no activity the given confession prescribes is a candidate for a free exercise exemption because no activities based on that confession are prescribed for its adherents alone. As mentioned, such exemption is improper unless adherents, on their own accounting, distinguish prescriptions applicable only to them from prescriptions applicable to the political community. Unless they affirm this difference, adherents of a religious or comprehensive confession withdraw any claim to free exercise exemptions because they withdraw their affirmation of democracy.

If the Religious Freedom Restoration Act is read through the account proposed here, one is led to disagree with the Supreme Court’s decision in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*. Quite apart from whether a corporation or its owners as they direct it are properly subjects of a free exercise claim or whether a less restrictive way is open for the government to ensure contraceptive coverage, granting exemption from the Affordable Care Act to Hobby Lobby’s owners is misguided because they did not appeal to religious prescriptions applicable only to adherents of their confession. To the contrary, their objection to abortion and, supposedly on this basis, to certain methods of birth control is prescribed for the political community and thus for all citizens—and this because the distinct activity for which they claimed exemption (refusal to participate in support of what they take to be forms of abortion) expresses their opposition to an aspect of the law. On the account of religious freedom commended in this essay, the owners of “closely-held” corporations are not exempt from the Affordable Care Act because on religious grounds they take it to be, at least in certain respects, a bad law.



In contrast to this proposal, currently widespread opinion seems to sanction, subject to the compelling interest test, free exercise exemptions for dissent from any generally applicable law, in distinction from activities prescribed only for members of a given comprehensive confession. The fact that public debate about *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby* has focused on whether a corporation or its owners are properly subjects of free exercise claims is a testimony to this view. The opinion results, I suspect, from assuming that religious convictions about the ultimate terms of evaluation depend on suprarational grounds and thus cannot be validated except by some authoritative disclosure. Given that premise, no distinction between prescriptions applicable only to adherents and those applicable to the political community is possible. This is, then, the same assumption that prompts many recent theories of democracy to separate at least some principles of justice from the diversity religious freedom protects.<sup>35</sup>

In any event, the present accounting depends on the way of reason. Because a democratic constitution is properly formative, that is, does nothing more and nothing less than establish a full and free political discourse, free exercise exemptions should not be provided constitutionally but, rather, only by statute. If statutory enactment of a nonspecific right to such exemptions is valid, the way of reason requires a difference among the prescriptions dependent on a given religious or comprehensive confession: prescriptions for attention to or engagement with certain symbols function to mediate the corresponding conviction or cultivate it directly and are prescribed only for adherents of the given confession; in contrast, political prescriptions are for all citizens. Given a relevant statute, claims to free exercise exemptions are rightly limited to activities prescribed by a comprehensive confession only for its adherents. In contrast, opposition to a generally applicable law properly belongs to the political discourse of “we the people.”

<sup>35</sup> Another objection should be considered. Against the present proposal, some may argue as follows: a judge who considers claims for free exercise exemptions could not depend on the distinction between direct and indirect cultivation without defending her or his decision by appeal to the way of reason; with that defense, however, she or he reads the way of reason into the constitutional provision for religious freedom and, thereby, violates it—because comprehensive convictions claiming to be immune to rational assessment are thereby delegitimized. To the contrary, however, the distinction in question can be sufficiently defended, on my accounting, by asserting (1) the state has a compelling interest in preventing free exercise exemptions for just any activity prescribed by a religious or comprehensive confession, and (2) opposition to a generally applicable law is inconsistent with a claim to be exempt from it because the activity for which one makes the claim does not contest the law’s general applicability. Thereby, a judge *implies* the way of reason, because her or his call for circumscribing the relevant activities and thus her or his distinction between exemption from and opposition to a generally applicable law are at least implicitly denied by any comprehensive conviction whose supposed validation depends on some particular historical context. But that is simply to say of this judge that she or he implies the way of reason because it alone makes sense of religious freedom. Nonetheless, defending a decision in the manner suggested remains, as does the constitutional provision for religious freedom, *explicitly* neutral to all comprehensive convictions.

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# Beyond the Binary: Hymnographic Constructions of Eastern Orthodox Gender Identities

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Scholars of contemporary and historical Eastern Orthodox thought who have engaged questions of gender remain divided about its ontological status.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary Orthodox theologians such as Paul Evdokimov, Kallistos Ware, and Thomas Hopko suggest to varying degrees that gender has some ontological link. Conversely, Valerie Karras, Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, and Nonna Verna Harrison reject the ontological significance of gender, with differing patristic and biblically based interpretations of the status of biological sex. The distinction between gender and sex so clearly made in other disciplines often appears muddled in Orthodox dialogues and writings on gender.<sup>2</sup> This overlapping ambiguity leads to such awkward phrasings as “biological gender” or “sexual gender” among contemporary Orthodox theologians.<sup>3</sup> Although some argue that such formulations are biblically grounded, in contemporary discourse these phrasings are problematic and confusing because they reject the social constructedness of gender promoted among scholars of gender and sexuality studies.<sup>4</sup> Despite the

<sup>1</sup> Valerie Karras, “Patristic Views on the Ontology of Gender,” in *Personhood: Orthodox Christianity and the Connection between Body, Mind, and Soul*, ed. John Chirban (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996), 113–119. Karras explains, “the first and most obvious question is what, exactly, constitutes God’s image in man, and is gender somehow reflective of that image?” (113).

<sup>2</sup> John Behr, “A Note on the ‘Ontology of Gender,’” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 42, nos. 3–4 (1998): 363–72. Behr’s critique does not actually take up the question of gender, but instead primarily focuses on the discussion of biological distinction and the significance of male- and female-sexed bodies for theology.

<sup>3</sup> Such phrasing was used in Edith Humphrey, “Response: Orthodoxy and Eros, AAR 2015,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, November 21, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (London: Routledge, 1999), 10–11. This distinction was first made prominent in 1948 by Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 18. Butler’s clarification that “the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all” is based on the claim that sex is equally as socially constructed as gender. Butler does not suggest that differences in genitals do not exist, but that how we interpret and perform their functions are socially constituted. As the topic of this article does not engage the physical body as much as social expectations for individuals with certain types of bodies, I will only focus on the social construct of gender and not take up Butler’s notion of sex.

claims of some Orthodox authors that the disciplines of women's, gender, and sexuality studies are intrinsically antithetical to the tenets of Orthodox theology, and that it is unclear in Orthodox theological anthropology to what degree gender relates to the divinizable "person" if at all, gender understood as a social construct (or at the very least an aspect of identity that is heavily socially inflected) remains significant for the self-understanding and self-expression of many contemporary Orthodox.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to eliding the important distinction between "sex" and "gender," in contemporary Orthodox Christian scholarship and pastoral writings, there is practically no theological consideration about how recognition of gender as a socially constructed human (not divine) product might yield greater inclusivity to gender expressions beyond the cisgender heteronormative binary.<sup>6</sup> Even in contemporary Orthodox thought, discussions of gender as a category open to more subtle differentiation than a binary of masculine-male and feminine-female is limited to historical analysis and the sainted extraordinary exceptions. The "problem of gender" in scholarship on Eastern Orthodox thought and practice all too often persists in addressing itself only to the role of women in the church and chiasmically prioritizing types of holiness based on the cisgender gender binary of men and women as a means to acquiring theosis.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, in what follows I suggest that the performance of gender identities and masculine and feminine attributes in Orthodox hymnography does not necessarily correlate with particularly male- or female-sexed bodies. I posit that the tendency to negate the validity of a spectrum of nonbinary and intersecting gender identities and to reinforce a binary theological construction of "separate but equal" gender is surprisingly

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Cowie, *More Spirited than Lions: An Orthodox Response to Feminism and a Practical Guide to the Spiritual Life for Women* (Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 2001), 50.

<sup>6</sup> The "cisgender heteronormative binary" refers to a conception of only two genders that are aligned distinctly with two sexes, so that female-bodied individuals are socially expected to express and present themselves as feminine women, and male-bodied individuals are socially expected to express themselves as masculine men, and thereby conform to the gender expectations for a given culture in which heterosexuality is the generally unquestioned norm (as it is in most cultures of Orthodox Christianity). See Valerie Karras, "Orthodox Theologies of Women and Ordained Ministry," in *Thinking Through Faith*, ed. Aristotle Papanikolaou and Elizabeth Prodromou (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008), 113–58. A compelling case for reading gender in Byzantine history (albeit not theology per se) as socially constructed has been made by Kathryn Ringrose, *The Perfect Servant: Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); and Sarah Hinkley Wilson, "Tradition, Priesthood, and Personhood: In the Trinitarian Theology of Elisabeth Behr-Sigel," *Pro Ecclesia* 19, no. 2 (2010): 121–50. Hinkley Wilson explains that "the basic dispute among contemporary Orthodox theologians regarding gender is whether it has any spiritual significance at all, and if so, what kind," and concludes that "gender-based spirituality is almost entirely without grounding in the tradition."

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Timothy Patitsas, "The Marriage of Priests: Towards an Orthodox Christian Theology of Gender," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (2007): 71–105; and Angelo Nicolaides, "The Role of Women in the Eastern Orthodox Church," *Australian eJournal of Theology* 4 (2005), [http://aejt.com.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/395539/AEJT\\_4.12\\_Nicolaides.pdf](http://aejt.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/395539/AEJT_4.12_Nicolaides.pdf).



alien to the immense boundary-crossing and identity-shaping hymnographic voice of the Eastern Orthodox Church.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, I do not take up the question of whether gender and sex are theologically discrete categories but rather explore the fruitfulness of the widely accepted premise that gender is indeed something malleable, constructed, and a socially recognized signifier.

Orthodox feminist theology in many ways is limited, and any type of constructive LGBTQ theological engagement is even more underrepresented and often vehemently rejected.<sup>9</sup> Feminist theologians within Orthodoxy often steer clear of the critical theoretical resources that could help them make their cases more strongly because these sources are not regarded with authority among the Orthodox hierarchs who are charged with the responsibility of changing the status quo.<sup>10</sup> The feminist Orthodox theology that has found broader acceptance has been successful because of its grounding

<sup>8</sup> Rosemary Dubowchik, "Singing with the Angels: Foundation Documents as Evidence for Musical Life in Monasteries of the Byzantine Empire," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 56 (2002): 281. In Byzantine theology, one might say along with Dubowchik that "ideally, the act of singing became a spiritual path, a form of nourishment for the soul and enlightenment for the mind, just as food, clothing, and sleep were necessary to satisfy the body."

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., David Dunn, "Civil Unions by Another Name: An Eastern Orthodox Defense of Gay Marriage," *Huffington Post*, September 12, 2011, accessed April 20, 2016, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-j-dunn-phd/eastern-orthodox-gay-marriage\\_b\\_894982.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-j-dunn-phd/eastern-orthodox-gay-marriage_b_894982.html); and one of its responses, John Whiteford, "An Orthodox Response to an Anti-Orthodox Defense of Gay Marriage," *St. Jonah Orthodox Church*, accessed April 21, 2016, [http://www.saintjonah.org/articles/dunn\\_rebuttal.html](http://www.saintjonah.org/articles/dunn_rebuttal.html).

<sup>10</sup> Eleni Kasselouri-Hatzivassiliadi, "Orthodox Women and Theological Education," *Ecumenical Review* (2014): 471–76; Nonna Harrison, "Orthodoxy and Feminism," *St. Nina Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (2009), accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.stnina.org/node/262>. Kasselouri-Hatzivassiliadi explains

In general, there is a kind of "resistance" to the "women's questions" in orthodox contexts, mainly because both are perceived as the province of secular feminism that is destructive of tradition and family. In some quarters of Orthodoxy, the term "modernism" and "postmodernism" is commonly understood as an attempt to promote dogmatic heresy in the church. In this frame, women theologians who are seeking contemporary expressions of the ancient Faith in their own lives are readily labeled as "feminists" and therefore, automatically also modernists (or late-modernists), in the most destructive sense of these words. Such ideas are widespread not only among some of the clergy but among academicians as well. (473)

Harrison observes that "for many today, including many Orthodox Christians, 'feminist' has become a convenient insult largely empty of meaning," and "some Orthodox Christians describe feminism as a dangerous heresy, an enemy they fear is already 'within the gates' of the Church, threatening to destroy it." The engagement of critical theory with historical and contemporary Orthodox Christian thought has been slow at best and outspokenly rejected at worst. For example, recently several scholars have engaged Eastern Orthodox sources through the lenses of discourse analysis and post-colonial theory (not without controversy), and yet significant consideration of gender theory has been minimal. George Demacopoulos cites the controversy surrounding this type of theoretical engagement in his January 29, 2015, blog post "Orthodox Fundamentalism," accessed April 12, 2016, <http://blogs.goarch.org/blog/-/blogs/orthodox-fundamentalism>. Engagement with feminist theory through Byzantine historiography (see, e.g., the use of Judith Butler in Stavroula Constantinou, "Performing Gender in Lay Saints' Lives," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 38 [2014]: 24–32) has found acceptance, but not in constructive theological directions.

in sources that are viewed from within Orthodoxy as having the authority of being part of the divinely inspired Orthodox tradition, and yet it does very little constructively with secular feminist theories.<sup>11</sup> Essentially, women writers within Orthodoxy who hope for an improved situation and opportunities for women in the church do not engage critical gender theorists such as Michel Foucault or Judith Butler because these theorists would make their writings easily dismissible by Orthodox bishops and conservatives within the church. Not only are these theorists perceived to be outside the Orthodox tradition, but the queer and gay atheistic identities of these authors are perceived as diametrically opposed to Orthodox beliefs. Admittedly these modern theorists did not have Byzantine or Orthodox contexts in mind during their writing, but by reading Orthodox sources with their theoretical insights and critiques in mind certain aspects of or ways of viewing the tradition are illumined that would otherwise be obscured or left unarticulated. Therefore, in lieu of making the likely unconvincing case (but perhaps more appealing to some Orthodox) that certain patristic authors reflect a particular resonance with contemporary gender theorists in order to justify my reliance on a fundamental claim of Butler's, I suggest that using contemporary gender theory offers scholars the opportunity to recognize material and approaches already present within the Orthodox tradition in a new, more liberating light.

Accordingly, I take seriously Butler's claim that gender is culturally built through habitual performance and reread Byzantine hymns as one mode of constructing and performing genders.<sup>12</sup> In what follows I agree with Byzantinist Liz James that the "concept of gender goes further than 'male' and 'female' biological sex, and invites us to see masculinity and femininity as social constructions."<sup>13</sup> Contemporary gender theory makes a challenging backdrop for examining several of the commemorative feasts and saints in the Menaion (the collection of hymns and liturgical texts for each month), and provides two discourse-shifting insights.<sup>14</sup> First, socially constructed gender functions as a culturally limited iconographic medium in communicating divine likeness among humanity. Gender is temporally constrained and maintained as a means of communicating holiness by a particular community's

<sup>11</sup> For example, see Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, *The Ministry of Women in the Church*, trans. Steven Bingham (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990).

<sup>12</sup> Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40 (1988): 531.

<sup>13</sup> Bronwen Neil, "An Introduction to Questions of Gender in Byzantium," in *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Lynda Garland (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 5, referring to Liz James, *Women, Men, and Eunuchs: Gender in Byzantium* (New York: Routledge, 1997), xvii.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Lingas, "Music," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. Robin Cormack and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 925. Lingas notes that "by the eleventh century, each day of the fixed and moveable cycles of the liturgical year had been supplied with its own set of hymns, forming the basis for the modern Byzantine rite's fifteen volumes of proper texts: the *Octoechos*, the *Triodion*, the *Pentekostarion*, and the twelve-part *Menaion*."

ability to view an individual as authentically possessing the divine image and likeness through participative mimesis of acknowledged deified types. Consequently, female saints often are depicted as holy through the acquisition of masculine attributes, while men are rarely depicted in feminine terms. Femininity is something that can be put on and taken off in holiness in the lives of female saints, while masculinity is less fluid and transfigured through realizing masculinity in christological imitation. Second, despite the importance of specific gendered attributes in communicating holiness historically, the ecclesiastical body in its hymnody adopts an inclusive, unified, and gender-bending voice in relation to God. In this liturgically performed and prayerfully realized voice, gendered expression has no necessary correlation to biological sex. The breaking of the cisgender binary in liturgical performance is not the equivalent to the abolishment of gender as a significant category of human experience and understanding for theological reflection altogether (one only has to look to the exclusivity of the male priesthood to see that liturgy remains very much gendered), but rather one instance of broadening of this category toward greater inclusivity in the unified voice of corporate prayer. In sum, a more encompassing conception of gender beyond a fixed binary is already evidenced in the liturgically approved and universally prescribed voice of the church in relation to God.

Despite stemming from a Byzantine tradition that sanctifies a literary corpus of transvestite or andromimetic nuns, homoerotic mystical imagery, and a patristic tradition of resolving gender division on the path to salvation, present-day Orthodox Christianity through its official and public hierarchical channels maintains a gender binary and the cisgender performance of that binary as normative and spiritually necessary.<sup>15</sup> Overall, engagement with gender that entertains noncisgender conceptions is notably underdeveloped among Orthodox scholarship, while essentializations of gender roles and experiences dominate. Orthodox history, however, especially during Byzantium, had much more fluidity than the current idealized maintenance of the cisgender binary would suggest.<sup>16</sup> Romanos the Melodist (d. 556), one of the most celebrated

<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., "2013 Assembly Statement on Marriage and Sexuality," Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, accessed April 16, 2016, <http://assemblyofbishops.org/about/documents/2013-assembly-statement-on-marriage-and-sexuality>. On the term "andromimetic," see Crystal Lubinsky, "What's in a Name? The Transvestite or Andromimetic Saints of Eastern Christendom," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Atlanta, November 21, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Byzantium, as much as it aligns with and represents Orthodox tradition, contained a great deal of gender diversity; Neil ("Introduction to Questions of Gender") explains that

masculine and feminine roles were not always clearly defined in Byzantium, allowing for "slippage" between the traditional roles of men and women, girls and boys. Eunuchs arguably constituted a "third gender" or no gender at all. External markers such as facial hair and clothing played a crucial role in marking masculinity or its lack. Gender roles were also defined to some extent by social status, which was in a state of flux from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries, as much linked to patronage networks as to



historical hymnographers of Orthodox tradition, for example, revels in the paradox that incorporates intentional slippage and overlap between what would otherwise be perceived as discrete categories (such as an erotic virgin) in order to communicate God's ability to confound and transcend human expectations.<sup>17</sup> The relevance of such transcendence of distinct identities in the articulation of theological song has not been sufficiently explored in contemporary Orthodox scholarship as a resource for rethinking theological interpretations of gender. Rich examples of gender bending that exist in the mystical and often hymn-oriented tradition of Eastern Orthodoxy are not considered relevant for applied and pastoral-theological interpretations of gender. The Song of Songs, for example, famously incorporates "gender-bending characterization" of its lover and beloved, and the controversial charismatic Byzantine saint Symeon the New Theologian (d. 1022) is noted for his invocation of erotic (even homoerotic!) imagery to articulate his experience of God.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the compositional and performative voices of hymns spanning the breadth of the Byzantine hymnographic tradition confound expectations of cisgender alignment.<sup>19</sup> Male choirs would sing hymns that assume a feminine character's voice (such as the sinful woman or the Mother of God—the Theotokos), and vice versa. This type of transgendered singing, however, has not been explored for constructive theological engagement and contemporary application. These types of discontinuities are likely reasons why internal Orthodox scholarship still combats a perception of being disjointed from the rest of religious studies (and modernity), and of stagnantly navel-gazing back at an overidealized Byzantium—even while not engaging constructively the historical resources of Byzantium.<sup>20</sup>

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wealth, as the empire came under a series of external and internal pressures. This fluidity applied equally in ecclesiastical and secular spheres. (2)

The Byzantine fathers would have agreed that gender and sex need not correlate, but for them it was a matter of sublimating sexuality altogether in order to attain "perfect" male gender. The most interesting comparison to be made between contemporary gender studies and the sources of our [the Byzantine] period lies in the difference between their respective approaches to the sex/gender distinction. Whereas bodies could change because they belonged to the transient realm of "becoming," gender as the social meaning attributed to the body was eternal, according to Byzantine thinkers. (6)

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Arentzen, "Virginity Recast: Romanos and the Mother of God" (PhD diss., Lund University Faculty of Theology, 2014).

<sup>18</sup> David Carr, "Gender and the Shaping of Desire in the Song of Songs and Its Interpretation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119, no. 2 (2000): 233–48, and "Imagery, Gendered: Wisdom Literature," in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Gender Studies*, ed. Julia M. O'Brien (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 365; John McGuckin, "Symeon the New Theologian's *Hymns of Divine Eros*: A Neglected Masterpiece of the Christian Mystical Tradition," *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 5, no. 2 (2005): 182–202.

<sup>19</sup> Derek Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "Women's Voices Bearing Witness: Biblical Memory in Ancient Orthodox Liturgy" (Orthodoxy in America annual lecture, Fordham University, February 28, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, this perception of Orthodoxy itself is now the subject of religious studies scholars such as Christopher D. L. Johnson, "'He Has Made the Dry Bones Live': Orientalism's

In contemporary Orthodox practice, Byzantium continues to offer a significantly untapped genre of reflection on gender identity in its tradition of liturgical hymnography as a ripe resource for present-day progressive Orthodox reflection.

Recent historical scholarship has highlighted the significant role of the Byzantine liturgical, and specifically hymnic, context for shaping Christian subjects. The current hymnographical and liturgical practice that stems from this tradition can likewise be a source for theological reflection. In both historic and contemporary practice, almost all of Orthodox liturgy is prayerfully sung and functions as a type of “sacramental mimesis,” calling its participants to share in a unified identity as represented in the hymns.<sup>21</sup> Despite the scriptedness of this collective worship intended to realize the participants as the unified Body of Christ, the experiences of each individual in singing the hymns are distinct. That is, although both male and female participants sing a unified hymn directing them to imitate and participate in the identity of sainted predecessors of both sexes, the participants’ understanding of the hymn may be variously inflected by their own lived experiences. The gendered and embodied distinctions participants bring with them to liturgical participation are perhaps not the most significant aspects of their identities, but nevertheless they do influence this mimetic experience and its effect on its living religious subjects.

Accordingly, the liturgical hymns are a very important source of internal individual identity building and external communal theological expression and reinforcement.<sup>22</sup> Even though there are many instances where liturgical

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Attempted Resuscitation of Eastern Christianity,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 82 (2014): 811–40. However, the issue of gender in relation to the perception of Orthodoxy remains undiscussed. Catia Galatariotou (“Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender,” *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 9 [1984]: 55–94) explains that for Byzantine authors, “misogyny was a fundamental tenet of Byzantine thinking” (66) and that “the reason for the misogyny of these men and women is the fact that they are simply expressing the ‘reality’ produced by the patriarchal structure of their culture. Permeating every aspect of the social formation—including institutions essential to its reproduction such as the Church, the administrative establishment, the family, monasticism—patriarchal assumptions were a fundamental component of the ‘common sense’ of the Byzantine world” (69).

<sup>21</sup> C. B. Tkacz, “Singing Women’s Words as Sacramental Mimesis,” *Recherches de Theologie et Philosophie Medievales* 70 (2003): 275–328.

<sup>22</sup> Hugh Wybrew (*The Orthodox Liturgy* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1990]) explains that the whole person is involved in the sensory worship of Orthodox liturgy and that “through their [the liturgical participants’] hearing music makes its appeal to them, for services are always sung or chanted, never read with the speaking voice” (177). In contemporary practice, reading does occur in some instances, typically for clarity or brevity’s sake; however, the majority of the services are still sung. Wybrew explains that “most, if not all, of the service is sung by the clergy and the choir or chanters,” suggesting that for many participants this leads to a “contemplative” experience of liturgy (179). In present day American Orthodox churches, however, there is a renewed interest in congregational singing as the ideal level of involvement in liturgy. See, e.g., Lawrence Barriger, “A Defense of Congregational Singing,” *American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A.*, accessed March 18, 2016, <http://acrod.org/ministries/music/plainchant/congregationalsing>.

hymnography needs revision and continued development for an Orthodox *lex orandi* to be consistent with the *lex credendi*, relevant insights about gender and holiness can be gained from the hymnographic tradition even as it is practiced currently.<sup>23</sup> Despite the emphasis that traditional discursive ecclesial statements and theological writings place on the glorification of particular roles and models of holiness for men and women (with very little room in between), if we prioritize other sources of theology, such as hymns, that are particularly influential on a wider base of liturgical participants, we find gender categories fluid and secondary to the communication of holiness.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, in what follows I analyze examples from the hymnographic tradition as it appears in contemporary liturgical practice—in which hymns are read, sung, and heard often without any historical contextualization. This in turn minimizes particularities of historicity and discrepancies in authorial attribution as interpretive informants and makes the intertextual liturgical and performative contexts more significant. In order to be as representative as possible of the tradition, I provide evidence from prominent recurring hymns and hymn types, and from major commemorations.<sup>25</sup> This approach is not to diminish the exceedingly important historical work to be done in the hugely diverse corpus of hymnody or the choices that are made at the local level that do constitute the inherent variety present in liturgical studies; rather I want to provide one relevant entrance point into an other-

<sup>23</sup> For an example of the need for revision, see the apolytikion of the feasts of the cross, as recently pointed out by George Demacopoulos, "War, Violence and the Feast of the Holy Cross in Byzantium" (inaugural lecture at the installation as the John Meyendorff-Patterson Chair of Orthodox Christian Studies, Fordham University, New York, October 7, 2015). For the centrality of the relationship between what is believed and what is prayed in contemporary Orthodox theology, see Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1966).

<sup>24</sup> The tendency to make distinctions of equal cisgender types based on relationality or scriptural citation is evident in Charles Joanides, "Toward an Orthodox Understanding of Gender Relations in Marriage," Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, accessed March 11, 2016, <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/marriage/interfaith/general-readings/towardorthodunderstanding>. The importance of hymns for theology is observed by Bogdan Bucur, "Exegesis of Biblical Theophanies in Byzantine Hymnography: Rewritten Bible?," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 92–112. Bucur observes that "by the very nature of its performative character, Hymnographic material has enjoyed a wider circulation and reception than most patristic writings" (92), and that "the vantage point of hymnographic exegesis is not outside the event to which it refers, but rather the event itself, actualized liturgically as a mystical 'today' that encompasses worshippers past, present, and future" (112).

<sup>25</sup> Unless otherwise specified, all the hymn texts in this article are the English translation from Holy Transfiguration Monastery's twelve-volume Greek *Menaion* (Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 2005), abbreviated hereafter as *HTM*, followed by the month and the page number. None of the hymns to which I refer are significantly divergent in practice or translation from the original Greek. Although the monastery that publishes this English version of the *Menaion* is not in communion with the Canonical Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of the United States, it maintains a near identical liturgical practice and uses the same *Menaion*. The *HTM* version is required for English use by numerous canonical jurisdictions in the United States, including, e.g., the Greek Metropolis of Denver, <http://www.denver.goarch.org/liturgical/required/>. It is metered to Byzantine usage and typically closely follows the Greek.



wise messy and uncritical aspect of tradition that is nonetheless one of the most significant for shaping Orthodox Christians' self-perceptions.

I begin with the hymns for male and female martyrs for which a general *apolytikion* (dismissal hymn) is used. These particular apolytikions are used in instances where specific hymns tailored to the attributes of particular saints are not available. In these hymns there are striking distinctions drawn along a binary gender divide indicating that certain attributes convey the holiness of men and women.<sup>26</sup> For example, the apolytikion for a female virgin martyr reads, "O Lord Jesus, unto Thee Thy lamb doth cry with a great voice: O my Bridegroom, Thee I love; and seeking Thee, I now contest, and with Thy baptism am crucified and buried. I suffer for Thy sake that I may reign with Thee; for Thy sake I die, that I may live in Thee: accept me offered out of longing to Thee as a spotless sacrifice. Lord, save our souls through her intercessions, since Thou art great in mercy."<sup>27</sup> This contrasts starkly to the apolytikion for a male martyr who is hymned with "Thy Martyr, O Lord, in his courageous contest for Thee received the prize of the crowns of incorruption and life from Thee, our immortal God. For since he possessed Thy strength, he cast down the tyrants and wholly destroyed the demons' strengthless presumption. O Christ God, by his prayers, save our souls, since Thou art merciful."<sup>28</sup> The male martyr is depicted in traditionally masculine language as a brave and strong victorious active warrior. In contrast, the female is more passively rendered as suffering as a pure sacrifice and bride. These distinct characterizations reflect ancient culturally constructed values about what holiness looks like for men and women.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, as the two different hymns evidence, a martyr saint must necessarily be categorized along a binary construction. A male virgin martyr is not celebrated with the female virgin martyr apolytikion, and a female nonvirgin martyr is not hymned with the male apolytikion. The prioritization of certain characteristics as reflective of male and female martyrs appear distinct. The hymn for a virgin martyr, however, does not portray a strict cisgender division of attributes. In the hymn for the virgin martyr, the saint is commemorated as a bride and pure unblemished sacrifice, a paschal offering modeled on the male person of Jesus. Of course, all individuals within the Orthodox tradition are called to "put on Christ" (Rom. 13:14), but this

<sup>26</sup> Note that the General Menaion is from the Slavonic rather than the Greek, which leads us slightly away from a historically Byzantine argument; however, it is commonly used by English-speaking churches of Byzantine heritage when the complete texts are either untranslated or unavailable. For instance, Archmandrite Ephrem, who was under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, links to the General Menaion, amid other Greek translated liturgical texts, via his page titled "Anastasis": <http://www.anastasis.org.uk/general.htm>.

<sup>27</sup> *General Menaion*, trans. N. Orloff (New York: AMS Press, 1969), 205–6 (translation adapted to reflect *HTM* usage).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 142 (translation adapted to reflect *HTM* usage).

<sup>29</sup> Carolyn Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 16. Connor observes that "marriage was the traditional role of women" in Byzantium.

feminine to masculine modeling indicates a pervasive conception of feminine gender identity as perfected by participating in masculine archetypes.<sup>30</sup>

The fluidity of moving between gendered voices and attributes in recognizing and participating in holiness appears unidirectional, based on the dominance of male voices and equation of maleness with holiness.<sup>31</sup> Women have gender instability. Indeed, the hymns represent and perpetuate a patriarchal tradition where women are required to put off their womanliness and to become manly to be holy, but with men the reverse is not overtly represented. Even where male saints may be said to “love” or “weep” in a way that could be characterized as feminine based on hagiographical and biblical types, they are never explicitly lauded for diminishing their masculine attributes.<sup>32</sup> Male saints do not have to “put off” anything particularly “manly” in putting on Christ, whereas women often are lauded for “putting off” their “womanly nature” in putting on Christ.<sup>33</sup> The consequence is not a gender neutral or androgynous putting on of Christ, but rather a distinctly masculine acquisition of virtue. Male figures who put on “womanly” characteristics are not considered more holy.<sup>34</sup> Instead, within historical and present day Orthodox literature, heretics are characterized by effeminacy, rubrics prohibit liturgical singing in an effeminate way, and monastic rules caution against the dangers of beardless, feminine-appearing youths.<sup>35</sup> A masculine to feminine transition of attributes is one that incites fear and implies sin, not sanctity.

<sup>30</sup> For all biblical citations, I follow the New King James Version.

<sup>31</sup> Damien Casey, “The Spiritual Valency of Gender in Byzantine Society,” in *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, ed. Bronwen Neil and Lynda Garland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 172. Casey explains that “while most contemporary philosophers recognize sex as biologically based, and gender as a cultural construct, this was not the view of Byzantine theologians. For them, gender and its value were eternal and spiritual, while biological sex was fluid and contingent, able to be changed by ascetic practices. Changing the body meant changing one’s gender, always toward and archetypal maleness, which was equated with spiritual perfection. There are no stories of Byzantine monks pretending to be women.”

<sup>32</sup> For example, see the depiction of St. Mecerius, *HTM*, November, 185.

<sup>33</sup> Connor (*Women of Byzantium*, 80) explains that with hagiography, “in many instances, the highest praise offered by a male author for his female subject was to describe her as having manly courage or determination or as excelling in virtue in spite of her sex,” and in the hymns a comparable claim could be made historically. The issue is how this historical way of talking about gender affects the spirituality and self-perception of those living in the present.

<sup>34</sup> Constantinou (“Performing Gender in Lay Saints’ *Lives*,” 32) posits that the hagiographical performance of gender suggests the opposite, at least among lay saints, where male holiness “is a mixture of a performance that is both male and emasculate.” But I would argue that even emasculate is not necessarily effeminate.

<sup>35</sup> Discussion of the development (particularly in the Greek practice) of women’s choirs and the ambivalence towards women’s voices in the church can be found in Leonie Liveris, *Ancient Taboos and Gender Prejudice* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2005), 156–8; and Lingas, “Music,” 921. Interestingly, Lingas observes that in the twelfth century although the “high singing of eunuchs . . . was itself unremarkable, any attempt to introduce male sopranos into modern Greek Orthodox worship would undoubtedly be challenged on the basis of Trullo’s canon 75 [which prohibits unsuitable singing in church].”

Consequently, it is not the case that in Christ male saints are glorified for becoming less masculine in a way that implies femininity, but rather there is a transfiguration of what it means to be manly in Christ.<sup>36</sup> Virtues that might otherwise appear feminine, such as humility, meekness, providing nourishment, and so on, are circumcised of their effeminacy and transfigured into an almost seamless singular maleness in the person of Christ. Indeed, both male and female saints are praised for humility or meekness, but, because of its christological association, this attribute is not figured as uniquely feminine. In the Orthodox hymnographic and theological tradition, Christ is celebrated for his humility as a kenotic manifestation of divine power.<sup>37</sup> When male saints are figured as meek and humble, it functions within the hymn to render the saint as empowered through christological imitation.<sup>38</sup> The words of masculinities theorist Michael Kimmel, namely, “manhood is equated with power,” are appropriate in the Orthodox hymnographic construction of masculinity, even if in the Orthodox understanding, this power is over such things as sin, the world, and pride, instead of over male and female others.<sup>39</sup> Just as female saints are hymned as holy by masculine attributes that suggest a divinely aided surpassing of human expectations and possibilities, male saints are praised for humility because it is not the cultural expectation for manly behavior. For example, in the apolytikion for Nicholas of Myra the saint is said to have “achieved the heights by humility,” and he is called “an icon of meekness.”<sup>40</sup> Although the hymns commemorate Nicholas as meek and humble, they also laud him for his zeal in striking Arius for his blasphemy, an incident for which he was rebuked by his fellow bishops until they were persuaded to exonerate him through a miraculous dream.<sup>41</sup> Meekness in the case of Nicholas is not recognized as particularly passive or “womanly,” but as Christlike because of his voluntary submission to the injustice of others.<sup>42</sup> There is a distinction between masculine and feminine attributes in the alignment of their holiness with particularly sexed bodies. Female saints can be lauded as masculine, but male saints do not share the same fluidity toward femininity—a distinction that displays an unsurprising prioritization (at least historically) of masculinity over femininity in describ-

<sup>36</sup> Casey (“Spiritual Valency,” 181) explains that Byzantine society was “deeply androcentric, even though this was often invisible to the extent that the masculine was equated with the spirit and hence also with the transcendence of gender.”

<sup>37</sup> See, e.g., the fourteenth antiphon from the service of the Twelve Gospels, “Today He who hung the earth upon the waters is hung upon the Cross,” in *Lenten Triodion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2002), 587.

<sup>38</sup> See Phil. 2:8.

<sup>39</sup> Michael Kimmel, *The Gender of Desire: Essays on Male Sexuality* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), 39.

<sup>40</sup> *HTM*, December, 37.

<sup>41</sup> The incident with Arius is mentioned hymnographically on the feast of St. Nicholas during the vespers *sichera* and the sixth ode of the canon of the saint at matins (*HTM*, December, 34, 41).

<sup>42</sup> See Matt. 27:12.



ing holiness. The spectrum of gender expression and presentation therefore is not bidirectional on the path to sanctity. In describing the saints, feminine to masculine is holy, but masculine to feminine is not—only masculine to divine masculine is. This dominance reveals the patriarchal preference historically embedded in the Orthodox Church and presupposes that there are almost rigid expectations of gendered holiness inscribed in and reproduced through Orthodox liturgical culture.<sup>43</sup>

In Orthodox hymnography, women's sanctity is often conveyed through the inversion, rejection, or fulfillment of gendered expectations in extraordinary ways. For example, in a hymn from the Royal Hours of the Nativity, the liturgical participants singing the hymn assume the voice of Joseph the Betrothed and offer a woeful rebuke of Mary upon finding her pregnant. Those singing exclaim in the words of Joseph,

O Mary, what is this spectacle that I behold in thee? I am at a loss and sore amazed, and my mind is stricken with dismay; wherefore depart from my sight straightway. O Mary, what is this spectacle that I behold in thee? In the stead of honor, thou hast brought me shame; in the stead of gladness sorrow; in the stead of praise condemnation. No longer, therefore, shall I bear the reproach of men; for I received thee from the priests of the temple as one blameless before the Lord. And what is this that I now behold?<sup>44</sup>

This hymn includes highly gendered historical expectations for women's sexually pure status, women bringing men honor through bodily purity, and women's purity being assured through male protection.<sup>45</sup> The resolution to Joseph's lament is situated liturgically on either side of this hymn with prophetic readings and hymns affirming Mary's role in bearing God to the world. Consequently, all of Joseph's gendered concerns about Mary's pregnancy are performed in the hymn to lead those singing to praise and marvel at Mary by drawing attention to the extraordinariness of the miracle of the Incarnation. It is as if the congregants would hear and participate in Joseph's despairing doubt of Mary to affirm the unnecessariness of his lament and thus affirm Mary's virginity, Joseph's honor, and the divine nature of the "spectacle" Joseph beholds. In this hymn, Mary is paradoxically celebrated precisely because, even though she is pregnant, none of the categories of dishonor or shame that Joseph decries are appropriate. This demonstrates the extraordinariness of Mary's conception and consequently celebrates her holiness. At the same time, however, among contemporary Christian audiences and participants, this hymn reinforces values of feminine purity as equated with a woman's (and her male guardian's) honor. Gender, even in reference

<sup>43</sup> Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "Chapter 3: Women in Byzantine Hagiography," in *That Gentle Strength*, ed. L. Coon (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1990), 40.

<sup>44</sup> First Hour of the Feast of the Nativity, *HTM*, December, 201.

<sup>45</sup> See the description of women's attributes in Byzantine literature in Galatariotou, "Holy Women and Witches."

to the Theotokos, is a means of communicating feminine holiness by reflecting on expectations for women, both through the critique of an authoritative man and by fulfilling feminine expectations in surprising and transcendent ways.

The inverted and extraordinary fulfillment of expectations of holiness for women is conveyed in the hymnographic allusions to hagiographical content such that sanctity is conveyed along gendered tropes and by correspondence to already acknowledged archetypes. Catherine the Great Martyr's commemoration, for example, includes a hymn that lauds her for changing "her womanly nature unto manliness" and while suffering crying out, "Thee do I long for, O my Bridegroom, and for Thy sake I have surrendered my body to the lawless."<sup>46</sup> Catherine is hymnographically depicted as worthy of veneration for assuming masculinity (which is identified with holiness) while also being figured as a bride. This bride, however, is remarkable and inverts gendered expectations of bodily purity by being described as one who has given her body to others—which in other contexts would suggest impurity and in antiquity ineligibility for marriage.<sup>47</sup> The hymn resolves this play on expectations by affirming that this bodily offering is out of love for her bridegroom. Informed by Catherine's hagiography, where Catherine is miraculously given a betrothal ring by Christ himself, the characterization of Catherine as the bride of Christ is exceedingly prominent in the hymn.<sup>48</sup> Based on her portrayal in the hymns, however, it is clear that this bride of Christ is remarkably holy because she possesses manly attributes, namely, her ability to withstand suffering and intellectually defend the faith.<sup>49</sup> Catherine is holy because she is transfigured beyond human expectations and norms for a woman.<sup>50</sup> The hymns for Catherine show her to be exemplary because, like the already accepted deified archetype of the Theotokos hymned in the famous Akathist hymn, she acts beyond the expectations of a virgin maid.<sup>51</sup> Catherine is praised as an orator for "show[ing] the rhetoricians' unbridled mouths to be as voiceless as fish" and as a philosopher "who in the face of an impious king didst convict the foolishness of the

<sup>46</sup> *HTM*, November, 185.

<sup>47</sup> On the rhetorical significance of purity, see Averil Cameron, "Virginity as Metaphor: Women and the Rhetoric of Early Christianity," in *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History*, ed. Averil Cameron (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

<sup>48</sup> Aecaterina, nos. 30–32 in *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, 2nd ed., ed. Société des Bollandistes, Subsidia Hagiographica 8 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1909), 5.

<sup>49</sup> See Ashbrook Harvey, "Chapter 3," 51; and Liveris, *Ancient Taboos*, 176. Liveris notes that the male voice is the "normative voice" and Ashbrook Harvey observes that feminine holiness is almost an impossibility based on this assumption.

<sup>50</sup> See the discussion of the concept of a holy woman in Liz James, "Men, Women, Eunuchs: Gender, Sex, and Power," in *A Social History of Byzantium*, ed. John Haldon (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 37–39.

<sup>51</sup> See, e.g., Leena Mari Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

Greeks and didst preach Christ.”<sup>52</sup> The expected cisgender recognition of being a “bride” of Christ pervades the hymns praising Catherine, but she also is perceived to be holy because of her assumption of the seemingly masculine role of a preacher and “rhetorician.”<sup>53</sup>

Even in present practice, congregations and choirs continue to praise such female saints as Catherine for changing or putting off “womanly nature” in order to don manliness.<sup>54</sup> This praise, I reiterate, is never attributed to male saints in terms of “manly” nature. Even as problematic as these statements about removing “womanliness” and putting on “manliness” may sound to modern sensibilities, they do testify to the conception of gender attributes as things that can be put on or taken off in the attainment and communication of holiness.<sup>55</sup> It is, however, challenging for the contemporary distinction between gender and sex to refer to a “womanly nature,” which implies an essentialist link between certain attributes to one’s nature. “Nature” (φύσις) in Orthodox theological discourse is not something that has any ontological question; it is absolutely a term to refer to one’s true, intrinsic mode of being, and this is especially evident in the history of christological development.<sup>56</sup> While this characterization of women is not uncommon in Byzantium, it reflects a religious conception of women that is rejected by modern (at least academic) Orthodox theologians.<sup>57</sup> The shift in the interpretation of what “woman” signifies attests to gender’s cultural

<sup>52</sup> *HTM*, November, 185; cf. the ninth *ikos* of the Akathist Hymn in *Lenten Triodion*, 430; Connor (*Women of Byzantium*, 19) notes that in early Byzantium, “although rhetoric and learning were considered part of a man’s masculine privilege, and women were thought unfit for learning, according to John Chrysostom, women obtained an education and participated in intellectual debate with men from this time on.”

<sup>53</sup> Nathalie Delierneux, “The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography: Volume II: Genres and Contexts*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 363–88. Discussion of Catherine’s hagiographical construction as an empowered woman can be found in Stavroula Constantinou, “The Authoritative Voice of St. Catherine of Alexandria,” *Acta Byzantina Fennica* 2 (2003–4): 20–37. Delierneux notes that “throughout the entire Byzantine period, authors emphasized the importance, for a female saint, of overcoming her natural weakness by demonstrating the “virility” of her soul. This motif finds its Christian origins in the age of persecutions, when women often showed themselves to be more courageous than men, and it is found everywhere in hagiographic literature, whether the vita concerns a nun, a hermit, or a wife. In each case, the authors could find various ways of extolling this essential quality” (380).

<sup>54</sup> *HTM*, November, 185.

<sup>55</sup> *HTM*, April, 7.

<sup>56</sup> There is not yet any substantive literature on the anthropological relation between “nature” and gender. Some very limited remarks pointing towards the importance of determining this relationship can be found in Liveris, *Ancient Taboos*, 76–77. Liveris points to the alienation that many women find in the assumption that “by their very nature as women, their vocations were already determined by history, theology, culture, and tradition.” For a study of patristic and Orthodox theological anthropology, see Nonna Harrison, *God’s Many-Splendored Image: Theological Anthropology for Christian Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).

<sup>57</sup> *HTM*, April, 8. For an example rejecting this view, see Elisabeth Behr Sigel, *The Ministry of Women in the Church*. For discussion of the Byzantine view of women, see Judith Herrin, *Unrivalled Influence: Women and Empire in Byzantium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).



dependence in communicating identity. Within the hymns “woman/ly” conveys holiness only in reference to no longer accepted derogatory affiliations with inherent sinfulness. As these types are understood in the liturgical tradition, however, the derogatory values they represent are reinforced, even if only subliminally, by their authoritative reiteration as part of corporate prayer.<sup>58</sup>

In the case of a second prominent female saint, Mary of Egypt, the hymns feature the transcendence of normative gender boundaries in the attainment of holiness and gender as the very means by which that holiness is communicated. Mary’s hagiography claims she lived an exceedingly sexual life, had a miraculous conversion, and lived practically naked in hermitic desert asceticism, surpassing the holiness even of priest-monks who experienced the divine light, for over forty years. Indeed Mary’s descriptions of herself before her repentance as being a “public temptation to licentiousness, not for payment,” and as having “an insatiable passion and uncontrollable lust,” were undoubtedly powerful in the Byzantine context where, according to Byzantinist Alexander Kazhdan, “the most edifying genre of literature was, at the same time, the most entertaining one” and “the average listener of hagiographical works wanted sexy stories.”<sup>59</sup> Consequently, Mary’s sexualized gender in the hymns functions as an important cipher through which holiness was historically communicated and recognized. For example, in the hymns Mary is figured as the “bride of Christ” and “the lamb and daughter of Christ.”<sup>60</sup> Mary, who was once worse than a harlot (with the assumption that such extreme sexual sin is the worst possible, especially for a woman), is now described as the “bride,” “lamb,” and “daughter” of Christ—that is, by appellations commonly used in the commemoration of virgin martyrs.<sup>61</sup> Theologically, this similarity is an affirmation of the degree of Mary’s penitence:

<sup>58</sup> Hilarion Alfeyev, “Theological Education in the 21st Century” (lecture, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, October 24, 2008), accessed March 12, 2016, <http://classicalchristianity.com/2015/07/15/on-the-authority-of-liturgical-texts/>. Alfeyev speaks to this authority of liturgy, and specifically hymns, in a way that suggests this authority is unquestionably legitimate—a claim that to some degree I contest in regard to the need for revision in some of the content of the hymns. Alfeyev explains that

The theological authority of liturgical texts is, in my opinion, higher than that of the works of the Fathers of the Church, for not everything in the works of the latter is of equal theological value and not everything has been accepted by the fullness of the Church. Liturgical texts, on the contrary, have been accepted by the whole Church as a “rule of faith” (*kanon pisteos*), for they have been read and sung everywhere in Orthodox churches over many centuries. Throughout this time, any erroneous ideas foreign to Orthodoxy that might have crept in either through misunderstanding or oversight were eliminated by church Tradition itself, leaving only pure and authoritative doctrine clothed by the poetic forms of the Church’s hymns.

<sup>59</sup> “The Life of Mary of Egypt,” in *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten Saints Lives in English Translation*, trans. Maria Kouli and ed. Alice-Mary Talbot (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1996), 80; Alexander Kazhdan, “Byzantine Hagiography and Sex in the Fifth to Twelfth Centuries,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44 (1990): 143.

<sup>60</sup> *Lenten Triodion*, 456–57.

<sup>61</sup> *HTM*, June, 124.

she can be ranked and commemorated in like ways to those commemorated for suffering in the flesh for the sake of Christ, and for having found holiness in purity. Likewise, in the words of the hymns, it is evident that Mary's former desire for sensual pleasure is wholly transfigured into love and desire for Christ and his cross—a redirection of eros that marks the relationship between a chaste bride and her devoted bridegroom.<sup>62</sup>

The hymns also describe Mary of Egypt as a manly warrior who “cut down with the sword of abstinence [her] passions . . . and . . . choked with the silence of the ascetic life [her] tempting thoughts,” and as a fertile and yet husbandly figure who “watered all the wilderness with [her] tears . . . and caused fruits of repentance to spring up.”<sup>63</sup> Mary made her “mind to be master” and is made “strong with saving grace.”<sup>64</sup> She “beat back the assaults of the passions,” “crushed the rebellions of darkness,” “darkened the faces of . . . enemies,” and “mightily fix[ed] thy gaze,” and yet she is still “all-modest Mary” and an “honorable bride.”<sup>65</sup> Drawing on historical gendered assumptions, Mary of Egypt is gendered as beyond gender, masculine and feminine and therefore transcendent of cisgender expectations. This Byzantine hymnographic interpretation of participation in the divine life transcends social gender boundaries while still depending upon them to communicate Mary's holiness. The Byzantine audience would not recognize how sinful Mary was if her past were not so “sexy” and would not recognize the height of her penitence if she were not compared to a man and virgin bride. The communication of Mary's holiness is dependent on historical gendered types that may no longer be as easily recognized (or even, perhaps, should not be recognized) as the best way of conveying her divine likeness. Indeed, if Mary's surpassing a man in holiness is not emphasized, will the measure of her holiness be indecipherable? Or, if Orthodox Christians continue to commemorate her as they do, at some point will their daughters finally ask, “What was so awful about Mary enjoying sex? Is feminine sexuality thought by the church to be evil?” and “Why do we care that Mary was holier than the priest Zosimas who discovered her in the desert? Is it supposed to be odd that a woman would surpass or be equal to a man?”

Even while descriptively lauding the superior virtues of masculinity, time and again the hymnographic voice of prayer in the church adopts the feminine voice and culturally feminine activities of weeping, mourning, longing, and bridal preparation.<sup>66</sup> This universally prescribed performance of feminine identity is featured in several of the hymns of Holy Week, especially

<sup>62</sup> *Lenten Triodion*, 404.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 449.

<sup>64</sup> *HTM*, April, 2–3.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>66</sup> See Georgia Frank, “Romanos and the Night Vigil in the Sixth Century,” in *A People's History of Byzantine Christianity*, ed. Derek Krueger (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 75.

that of Kassiani.<sup>67</sup> In this hymn, the congregation is figured as the sinful penitent woman lamenting over her sins and kissing and anointing the feet of Christ.<sup>68</sup> When hymnographers, hagiographers, or patristic authors write about holiness, masculine attributes are symbols for holiness that both male and female persons should embody.<sup>69</sup> When, however, individuals realize themselves as prayerful divine participants, the spectrum of gender identities performed is much more diverse and fluid. It is in the hymnographic voice of those singing, to borrow Butler's terms, "that man and masculine might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one."<sup>70</sup> There is a disconnect between what is said discursively in the content of the hymns that betrays a type of gender divide and male dominance and how the church as simultaneously the (feminine) "bride" and (masculine) "Body" of Christ is believed to be realized and internalized liturgically through prayer.<sup>71</sup>

Although in the content of the hymns, gendered holiness appears distinct for men and almost necessarily in transition for women, in the singing of the hymns there is a divine-human orientation inclusive of multiple gender attributes mosaically mapped onto the one Body of Christ. This unified multiplicity of the Christian identity realized liturgically is evident in the dialogue hymns found in the Menaion commemorating major feasts. Within

<sup>67</sup> For an overview of the Byzantine hagiography, hymnography, and early reception of Kassiani, see Kurt Sherry, *Kassia the Nun in Context* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013); and Ashbrook Harvey, "Women's Voices Bearing Witness." Ashbrook Harvey observes that "as with other Byzantine women hymnographers, Kassia's compositions would have been sung first—and perhaps only—by women's choirs, the nuns of her convent," but also notes that it is "sung to this day in Orthodox churches of Byzantine tradition" (18). As such, it is no longer a strictly woman's song, but now a song inscribed in the universal liturgical performance of every attentive participant.

<sup>68</sup> For the "Hymn of Kassiani," I cite a standard English reference (although Holy Week books with distinctive translations abound!) in *Lenten Triodion*, 540; Alexander Riehle, "Authorship and Gender (and) Identity: Women's Writing in the Middle Byzantine Period," in *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature*, ed. Algae Pizzone (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 246–62. Riehle explains that this hymn

engages the performing congregation and the actual audience of the hymn in identifying with the sinful woman. While in the beginning of the poem the narrator identifies the sinful woman as a specific "historical" person ("the woman who/fell into many sins") and at the same disassociates herself/himself from her by pointing to her, the individual characteristics of that person and the distance between the narrator and the character yield to collective traits of woman and identification of the narrator and the character. This effect must have been intensified in a liturgical performance, in which the chanted words are not quickly read, but protracted. In this way, the performing choir or congregation would sing for the largest part a first-person narrative, using the repenting and begging words of the sinful woman that had been granted redemption by Christ. . . . Thus, the universal woman, whose words were to be repeated annually in a liturgical performance, would continue to supplicate and beg for mercy until ultimate release from sins would be granted through the second coming of Christ (250–51).

<sup>69</sup> Ashbrook Harvey, "Chapter 3," 51.

<sup>70</sup> Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 6.

<sup>71</sup> See 2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:25, and 1 Cor. 12:27.



these hymns, often incorporated as part of the canon at matins, two voices are present, but there is a unity of song. Therefore, male and female liturgical participants sing or at least prayerfully engage in feminine, masculine, divine, angelic, prophetic, penitential, faithful, and even natural element voices without qualification or distinction.<sup>72</sup> Prayerfully singing in the voice of another inscribes and calls into being within the practitioner the identities performed.<sup>73</sup> Liturgical participants are scripted to pray from a plethora of perspectives in order to marvel at and respond appropriately to divine economy, mercy, and love. In one canon, participants sing both as Gabriel and the Theotokos, in another as Jesus and John the Baptist, and in a third as Jesus and the Theotokos.<sup>74</sup> Reminiscent of the pervasive influence of Dionysius the Areopagite, in these canons there is a multiplicity of images, signifiers, and voices with which the unknowable God is praised and made known. Granted, these hymnic figures are highly spiritualized (a feature to which may lead some to pose the troubling question asked by Mary Daly [in a Catholic context], “What does Mary have to do with real women?”), but they are also gendered.<sup>75</sup> Through the performance of these dialogue hymns, divinely participative gender identities are shaped among believers in a way that transcends binary and cisgender distinctions.

One example of hymns where the performance of gender identity by those hymning includes participating in a spectrum of diverse experiences and attributes is the eighth ode of the canon for the Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple. These hymns are written and ordered such that those singing adopt the voices of Mary’s mother Anna and the temple priest Zacharias. These hymns draw from the Protoevangelium of James to describe the bringing of the three-year-old Virgin Mary to the temple by her parents, where she joyously entered and was received by the priest Zacharias to live before reaching maturity and being betrothed to Joseph.<sup>76</sup> In this particular example, the dialogue is offset by narration at the beginning of the hymn with phrases like “Zacharias said to her” and “Anna answered him.” The ma-

<sup>72</sup> All of these voices are repeatedly evident if one looks at the hymns for the major feasts centrally found in the single volume as *The Festal Menaion*, trans. Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware (South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 1998).

<sup>73</sup> Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects*, 73.

<sup>74</sup> *HTM*, March, 100–101; January, 60; December, 197.

<sup>75</sup> Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (London: Women’s Press, 1986), 81; Judith Butler, “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” in *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories*, ed. Diana Fuss (New York: Routledge, 1991), 24; Paul Evdokimov, *Woman and Salvation of the World*, trans. Anthony Gythiel (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1994), 23–24. Evdokimov observes, “within Christian history the veneration of the Theotokos has developed dramatically. She is made into a third being, outside of the common human essence; she is Virgin and Mother, but she is not a woman. There seems to be no possible middle ground between the Virgin and the diabolical creature that tempted the hermits (meaning a woman).”

<sup>76</sup> *Protoevangelium of James*, trans. Alexander Walker, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland-Coxe (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing, 1886).

jority of the ode, however, is still in the voice of these characters speaking aloud. Those singing therefore indiscriminately adopt the male priestly voice of Zacharias to address Anna and say, "Thou bringest in the true Mother of Life, whom the Prophets of God clearly proclaim long ago as Theotokos; but how shall the temple contain her? Wherefore, I cry with wonder: Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord." Despite the fact that this dialogue is situated within the narrative and thus appears descriptive of another person's voice, by the time the hymn reaches "Wherefore, I cry with wonder," the one singing is united with Zacharias's "I." Thus the one hymning is not merely relaying Zacharias's prayer, "Bless ye the Lord, all ye works of the Lord," but is praying this prayer herself.<sup>77</sup> The one singing participates in the identity of the character of the hymn even if that character is of a different gender, rank, or spiritual state from the one singing. In this case, for example, a laywoman could sing this hymn and prayerfully participate in and be spiritually shaped by the authoritative, priestly, and masculine identity of Zacharias.<sup>78</sup>

Anna's response to Zacharias in the same canon offers a maternal and feminine voice to be assumed by those of all genders singing the canon. Anna responds to Zacharias in the canon, saying, "I am come as the supplicant of God, to beseech Him with faith and prayer that He receive the fruit of my travail; and after giving birth, I bring the babe to Him that gave her. Wherefore, skipping for joy, I cry: Bless ye the Lord; all ye works of the Lord."<sup>79</sup> The same transition occurs in this hymn where the singer's voice is united to the exclamation of Anna by the end of hymn. Even male singers take on this maternal, feminine voice to cultivate the internal joy and sense of offering expressed by Anna. This type of universal participation in the voices of the hymns is reinforced by the affirmation hymned at the Vespers of Christ's Nativity, where the Theotokos is said to be offered by all of humanity (not just Anna) to God.<sup>80</sup> By taking up the voice of Anna in the canon, the singers come to identify with the travail of childbirth and learn the joy with which this offering should be made by all of humanity (not just childbearing women).<sup>81</sup>

In individual hymns we also find adoption of explicitly gendered voices prescribed to be sung and experienced by both male and female choirs without distinction. In the third sticheron of the lity of the compline for Theophany (the feast of Jesus's baptism in the Jordan), there are multiple identities and voices embraced without qualification in order to hymn the feast of God.<sup>82</sup> It reads, "Come, let us imitate the wise virgins; come, let us meet the Master, Who hath appeared; for as the Bridegroom, He is come forth

<sup>77</sup> *HTM*, November, 156.

<sup>78</sup> Women (especially nuns) have a long history of liturgical singing in Orthodox Christianity, although the circumstances shaping these practices varied and continue to vary depending particular local customs. See Connor, *Women of Byzantium*.

<sup>79</sup> *HTM*, November, 156.

<sup>80</sup> *HTM*, December, 212.

<sup>81</sup> *HTM*, November, 156.

<sup>82</sup> See Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–23; and Matt. 3:13–17.

unto John. Seeing Thee, the Jordan was sore afraid and remained still; John cried out: I dare not take hold of Thine immortal head. The Spirit descended in the form of a dove to hallow the waters, and a voice cried from Heaven; This is My Son, Who is come into the world to save mankind. O Lord, glory be to Thee."<sup>83</sup> Within one hymn there is a call to emulate wise female virgins, prepare as brides, imitate the awestruck fear of the river, cry out with the voice of John about the participants' unworthiness to touch God, assume the voice of God the Father to affirm the divinity of Jesus, and then resolve by a united acclamation of the faithful in praise. All of these different voices and perspectives form a unified prayer.<sup>84</sup> Male singers are called to put on the identity of virginal brides, female singers take up the voice of God the Father and John the Baptist, and humans emulate a river to offer a song of prayer. The performance of gender in this hymn liturgically vacillates between united binaries of virgin and bride, masculine and feminine, heaven and earth, and divine and human. Many voices and modes are employed without distinction or cisgender alignment in performance, in order to offer a hymn of praise to God.<sup>85</sup> Singing across the gender binary inscribes within the practitioner identities that are gender fluid and not limited to specific gendered vocative roles.<sup>86</sup> It is not that gender is transcended, and so is therefore insignificant theologically; rather gender is a constructed means of knowing and praising God through unified multiplicity and is thus believed to be divinely reflective.<sup>87</sup> Gender is just one of many categories scripted liturgically as malleable in praising God. Hymns ask the participants, or rather require them, to take up the identities of others to shape them in holiness, even if they have no direct correspondence to the voices in which they sing other than their orientation toward God and the belief that performing in this way brings one closer to knowledge of and participation in God. It is not just that there are no boundaries, or there is no binary, but that holiness is sought and celebrated through the transcendence and blurring of these boundaries.

In the genre of individual saint hymns the voices of those singing also transcend fixed gender boundaries. In the theotokion prescribed for Mary of Egypt's feast, the voice is one of evoking the penitential prayer of Psalm 50 attributed to King David and feminized as a bride who asks the Theotokos to "Sprinkle me and cleanse me, O pure one, with the hyssop of thy prayers; vouchsafe that bride chamber unto me."<sup>88</sup> Mary of Egypt models the adop-

<sup>83</sup> *HTM*, January, 83.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.* The hymn is framed with a "Come let us . . . O Lord, glory be to Thee," emphasizing a singular rendering of glory to God.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> See Krueger, *Liturgical Subjects*, 19.

<sup>87</sup> See *Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Lubheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987).

<sup>88</sup> Orthodox hymnographic tradition unequivocally attributes the Psalms to David, as in, for example, the third matins postgospel hymn during the Triodion season: "Like David do I cry to Thee: Have mercy upon me, O God, in Thy great mercy." See *Lenten Triodion*, 101.



tion of other gendered voices in her own prayer and offers it to those hymning her praises as their own through her gendered voice. The hymn also exclaims through the self-directed voice of its singers, "Truly thy [referring to oneself] garments are all exceeding filthy with licentious deeds and lewd desires," thus putting the distinctively sinful "womanly" identity of Mary on all liturgical participants.<sup>89</sup> It is unlikely, however, that all those singing this hymn are actually as licentious as Mary's liturgically read hagiography claims she is before her repentance.<sup>90</sup> Through performance, the singers are inscribed with the voice of an impure bride who is asking to be cleansed. Mary's gendering in her hagiography and subsequent hymns is essential to communicating the degree of her sinfulness and radiance of her penitent holiness. This sinfulness and hope of penitence, however, is consequently performed in her own gendered voice so as not to lose its depth as communicated through inverted gendered expectations.<sup>91</sup> This hymn offers one of many examples in which the hymn content simultaneously relies on gendered expectations and types to communicate holiness, and invites those singing the hymns to transition beyond their own gendered identities and specific experiences in spiritual praxis and praise.

In conclusion, the Eastern Orthodox hymnographic tradition reflects a tension and ambiguity regarding the significance and fixity of gender for Orthodox religious thought. The hymns suggest that gender is a constructed means of realizing diversely identified ecclesiastical participants as the unified Body and Bride of Christ, and that gender is a mode of expressing holiness by participation in temporally produced and legible gendered types.<sup>92</sup> Hymnographic content communicates divine likeness that is recognizable based on acknowledged gendered expectations of holiness. Although I suggest that gender is transcended and ultimately unbounded in deification, it is still significant in terms of the temporal communication and experience of holiness. Even though masculine attributes are historically more closely associated with divine reflectivity, and even though this association results in feminine models of holiness often being depicted in "manly" terms, even male

<sup>89</sup> Ashbrook Harvey ("Chapter 3," 51) rightly claims that "for the early Byzantine church, women's bodies symbolized with acute clarity the conditions of purity and perdition, to such an extent that they represent that condition for the whole of humankind."

<sup>90</sup> *HTM*, April, 6. Mary's hagiography ("The Life of Mary of Egypt," 80) includes the following:

For more than seventeen years—please forgive me—I was a public temptation to licentiousness, not for payment, I swear, since I did not accept anything although men often wished to pay me. I simply contrived this so that I could seduce many more men, thus turning my lust into a free gift. You should not think that I did not accept payment because I was rich, for I lived by begging [col. 3712] and often by spinning coarse flax fibers. The truth is that I had an insatiable passion and uncontrollable lust to wallow in filth. This was and was considered to be my life, to insult nature <with my lust>.

<sup>91</sup> Ashbrook Harvey, "Chapter 3," 51.

<sup>92</sup> See Eph. 5:23–31 and 1 Cor. 12:27.

singers adopt traditionally feminine characteristics in the voice of prayer. As a human social construction signifying an infinite divine similitude, gender expressions spanning beyond the binary are limited only by human perceptions of lived embodied holiness. The inclusivity of the voiced hymnographic tradition poses challenges to perceptions of gendered holiness situated only along a binary. The tradition of dialogue hymns provides an array of diverse voices seamlessly transitioning between masculine and feminine attributes to offer divine praise and be shaped in divine likeness. Individual hymns also take on the voice of saints whose holiness is communicated specifically through gendered characteristics. These are offered to male and female hymnic participants as a means of participating in a divine reality where division and polarity does not exist between those called “male” and “female.”<sup>93</sup>

This dynamic conception of gender as both transcendent and iconic offers at least two avenues for future consideration and application for scholars of Orthodox Christianity. First, the interpretation of manliness and womanliness has developed over time, as have the ways in which scholars interpret the subjugation of “womanly nature” in historical texts. In many instances the words of the hymns remain the same, however, and are usually hymned without any ameliorating interpretation when they are heard in the liturgical context.<sup>94</sup> There are no footnotes during liturgy to qualify and contextualize statements that are very easily heard as demeaning to all who identify or present themselves as women. In contemporary practice, this could lead to alienation among those whose gender identities are liturgically negated or valued only in so much as they become “manly.”<sup>95</sup> It is necessary to interrogate the iconicity of hymns in present practice and offer historically grounded and theologically consistent revisions. Second, the hymns prompt a question for

<sup>93</sup> For more on resolving division between sexes in Byzantine theology, see Maximus the Confessor, “Difficulty 41,” in *Maximus the Confessor*, trans. Andrew Louth (London: Routledge, 1996), 157.

<sup>94</sup> Casey, “Spiritual Valency,” 167. Casey observes that “how gender is understood articulates the values of a society and hence its ideas of justice, order, and what should be striven for. This is because it expresses what is most basic to humanity and how we understand difference and relation. . . . Gender in Byzantine culture was not only implicitly hierarchical but was also firmly linked with spiritual authority.”

<sup>95</sup> See excerpts from Frederica Matthews-Green, “Men and Orthodoxy,” Ancient Faith Radio, July 18, 2008, transcript and audio, [https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/features/men\\_and\\_orthodoxy\\_frederica\\_mathewes\\_green](https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/features/men_and_orthodoxy_frederica_mathewes_green). Matthews-Green recounts that the “manliness” of Orthodoxy is appealing to some contemporary Orthodox men, one of whom remarked that the appeal was, “to sum it up—beards. Masculinity,” and that in the Orthodox church, “Instead of negativity, they [men] are surrounded constantly by positive role models in the saints, in icons, in the daily round of hymns and stories of saints’ lives, they hear about good men, heroic men, celebrated in our church every time we gather for worship.” The same cannot be said about women and the celebration of femininity, or about persons who do not fit within a binary construction of gender. The alienation of those who do not fit within the patriarchally oriented and validating paradigm of Orthodoxy is evidenced by the naming of organizations external to the formal organization of Orthodox hierarchy, such as Axios: Eastern and Orthodox Gay and Lesbian Christians (<http://www.axios.org/doku.php>). Similarly, the *St. Nina Quarterly* provides a forum for women’s (sometimes feminist) concerns within Orthodoxy.

continued historical and theological consideration: if gender is so fluid and inclusive in the voice of hymns, then why is there so much in the praxis and idealization of the tradition that reinforces gender expression along an exclusive binary?<sup>96</sup> If in the voice of praise the performance of noncisgender identities and attributes can be fluid and celebratory, then why not in other aspects of liturgical practice and among the participants of Orthodox communities? Although the constructed gender binary is charged with values about divine likeness that are deeply influenced by social recognition, the voice of the Orthodox Church in prayer suggests that gender can be envisioned and expressed in infinitely diverse alignments and yet remain divinely reflective and participative.

<sup>96</sup> Maria McDowell, "Seeing Gender: Orthodox Liturgy, Orthodox Personhood, Unorthodox Exclusion," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 33, no. 2 (2013): 77. McDowell observes that "the binary division of human personhood is the basis for opposition to female priests" by such theologians as Thomas Hopko.



# Book Reviews

BENDROTH, MARGARET. *The Last Puritans: Mainline Protestants and the Power of the Past*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015. ix+246 pp. \$27.95 (paper).

Congregationalists occupy a very special place in American religious history—the mythological bedrock of Puritans and Pilgrims, the theological legacies of Jonathan Edwards and Horace Bushnell, the evangelical inheritance of great awakenings, the collegiate benchmarks of Harvard and Yale. Exploring the weight of that history on its denominational heirs, Margaret Bendroth offers a subtle account of the way in which latter-day Congregationalists simultaneously engaged their history and distanced themselves from it. As a leading embodiment of ecumenical Protestantism, Congregationalists “learned to hold their denominational pride loosely” (8), especially after the formation of the United Church of Christ was finalized in 1957. Bendroth presents a nuanced portrait of how the past functions within a modernist, forward-looking, activist body, the looming presence of history amid the very disentanglement from much of that heritage. A close-up institutional and denominational chronicle, Bendroth’s work is also an astute reflection on how American mainline Protestants, in letting go of unusable pasts, searched for newly usable ones in everything from souvenir medals to pageantry.

Given the staggering demographic collapse of ecumenical Protestantism over the last forty years, it is a challenge to plot a denominational story like this one as anything but a story of decline: how have Congregationalists, once cultural power brokers, been marginalized to the point of near anonymity? Bendroth takes the focus off that despairing question, worrying little about why evangelicals stole so much of the show since the 1970s and concentrating instead on the making of a hefty mainline Protestant tradition over the last two centuries. Current statistics may not favor that tradition’s denominational institutions, but Bendroth follows the lead of historian David Hollinger in stressing the vast cultural diffusion of ecumenical Protestantism’s influence. Even as their numbers trended downward, mainline Protestants could rest assured of their legacy: they had helped forge and defend a more pluralistic, cosmopolitan, and inclusive society. The values of the mainline denominations, including the particularly progressive orientation of the United Church of Christ, flourished in social, political, and global arenas far beyond the reach of local congregations and ecclesial assemblies.

How much consolation those women and men who spent their lives building up these institutions should take from this dispersed influence is hard to say. Often they wanted to open up a world beyond their own white Protestant privilege, and to do that they had to bear witness to the demise of their own cultural centrality. But that exit—both self-imposed and demographically determined—left much of the battlefield to other white Protestants who shared few of those ecumenical values and exuded only grievance over the cultural prevalence of liberal progressivism. As a historian, Bendroth offers few prescriptions to these present predicaments beyond a new round of ecumenical Protestant engagement with the past, this time to appreciate the more immediate history of those “who learned to live with ambiguities, who chose to believe without demanding certainties” (194). Bendroth offers a worthwhile call for a newly complex historical awareness on the part of mainline Protestants, but it remains hard to imagine that such appreciation will rekindle the institutional fortunes of their denominations.

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For those looking for a well-honed view of ecumenical Protestantism's history, Bendroth's study is an excellent resource. Working with Congregationalists, she begins where they would have begun—with the community textures of church life; she accents the ancestral localism that long shaped historical memory among pious New Englanders. The commitment to congregational independence was, Bendroth shows, increasingly paired with a larger sense of denominational association, a trans-local ecclesial body that (among other things) knit particular churches into a shared hereditary identification with the Pilgrims. Inheriting the Pilgrims was always theologically and politically complex, especially as Trinitarians and Unitarians did battle over who best embodied the spirit of these hallowed forebears. If establishing a cohesive order to Congregational polity proved elusive, so did finding agreement on what the Puritan past meant for its nineteenth-century heirs: was it a touchstone for doctrine and piety, a model of church government, or a pattern of resistance and adventure? Historical memory was itself divisive, if not sectarian; it propelled and refused change.

Bendroth does a fine job throughout of showing how hard it was for Congregationalists to find a "middle ground" that simultaneously embraced their seventeenth-century roots and remained open to shifting cultural developments (50). In all kinds of ways, the ongoing divisions within Congregationalism—between the United Church of Christ and its conservative kin (who receive only modest attention from Bendroth)—reveal how tenuous the hold on that middle ground remains. When the Congregational past actually unified, it did so especially through patriotic generalities—the equation of the Pilgrims with American liberties and independence. But, even that freedom-loving boast hardly sat well with Baptists who remembered the Puritans as anything but tolerant and open-minded. In due time, Congregational historians, including Williston Walker, were more than willing to correct the impression that the Pilgrims were foundationally responsible for American religious freedom. In place of New England's familiar filiopiety, Walker offered a new modernist historiography amenable to progressive sensibilities. Walker's historicism was symptomatic of broader intellectual currents that would eventually pull the denomination deep into the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. But, those conflicts, Bendroth suggests, paled in comparison to the battles over Congregational polity and institutional identity. Reinvented to resist the denominational merger into the United Church of Christ, the Pilgrims became "boundary markers" for a Congregational polity spared from a misguided ecumenism (154). All told, Bendroth is a very effective guide to American Congregationalism's history and to the ways in which that history has been continually remade over the last two centuries. LEIGH E. SCHMIDT, *Washington University in St. Louis*.

BRADY, KATHLEEN. *The Distinctiveness of Religion in American Law: Rethinking Religion Clause Jurisprudence*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 354 pp. \$113.00 (cloth).

Religion is something special in American law. A swelling army of scholars think this is unfair. Kathleen Brady shows how and when equality between religion and nonreligion became the central theme of religion law scholarship and offers an original and important response that will persuade almost nobody.

Religion has traditionally gotten distinctive treatment. Quakers' and Mennonites' objections to participation in war have been accommodated since Colonial times. Sacramental wine was permitted during Prohibition. Today the Catholic

Church is exempted from antidiscrimination laws when it denies ordination to women. Jewish and Muslim prisoners are entitled to Kosher or halal food.

Disestablishment is often regarded as hostile to religion but in fact is another strategy for privileging it. When the Supreme Court invalidated school prayers, it explained (quoting James Madison) that "religion is too personal, too sacred, too holy, to permit its 'unhallowed perversion' by a civil magistrate" (*Engel v. Vitale*, 1962).

The theory of the First Amendment's religion clauses was once dominated by the idea of separation of church and state. Increasingly, the central theme is equality. Brady's first chapter maps the shifting discourse, offering the best overview I have seen of the tectonic shifts in the case-law and legal scholarship. Anyone who wants to understand contemporary debates on religious liberty must read it.

She then surveys attempts to justify religion's special treatment. All those attempts fail, because they "point to something about religion that is shared by secular beliefs and practices as well" (57), such as its importance to nonadherents or its divisiveness. Here is Brady's own justification: "Religion is directed to the Power that grounds all that is, and religious belief and practice involve a relationship to this reality that overcomes humanity's deepest existential threats through union or communion with this absolute and eternal source. There can be nothing more important than the Ultimate Reality by which all things are, and no higher human interest than the salvation or liberation or fulfillment that inheres in this connection" (102).

The rest of the book takes up the most controversial aspect of distinctive treatment: religious exemptions from generally applicable laws. After cataloging the difficulties of applying the general rule of accommodation that is mandated in federal law and the laws of some states, Brady tries to improve on the vague balancing test that is the best courts have been able to devise. She proposes that "religious believers should be afforded relief whenever laws substantially burden practices essential to their relationship with the divine unless there is no way to alleviate the burden without endangering the existence, peace, or safety of the state, or basic conditions of public order, or invading the rights of others" (304). With respect to less central religious practices, she would require government "to show that the costs of accommodation are more than minimal" (277). This set of privileges for religion may entail large costs, but the value of religion is so great that "there should be few, if any limits on the sacrifices that the political community is willing to make" (269).

This elegant book would be a good introduction to the hotly contested issue of special treatment of religion. Yet its substantive position is extreme. Brady would make religious believers into a constitutional aristocracy, entitled to violate any law unless the most urgent state interests dictate otherwise.

Her ecumenical description of the value of religion, which she finds in a huge range of inconsistent sects, depends on a religious voluntarism that many of them reject: "compulsion is inconsistent with the nature of religious faith. Religion involves union or communion with the divine, and such a connection requires willing participation" (104–5). Even if that is true, it doesn't entail religious toleration: people are more likely to make the right choices if the authorities don't allow them to be tempted by heretics.

Brady aims to avoid "controversial theological premises," which "lack persuasive force in an increasingly secular society" (69). "We are not so much a religious people today as a diverse people, some of whom are religious and some of whom are not" (75). Yet she steams straight into that iceberg. Even most believers will have trouble with this: "Religion is, by its nature, the highest of human concerns. Nothing can be more important to individuals than their relationship with the divine" (287). Millions pray and go to services but don't give such an overriding priority to



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their faith. Why should they? Brady's answer is that it is "reasonable to leave open the possibility that the trustworthiness of the divine can be affirmed and meaning found. Indeed, it would be foolish not to" (97). She is, however, asking for a lot more than leaving a possibility open. Rejecting her proposals does not depend on "insistence that religious experience is false" (303), just a lack of confidence that it takes priority over everything else. Is it really necessary to point out that agnosticism does not entail massive deference to religious claims? This huge hole in the center of the argument is particularly surprising in a book that on the whole is a model of clarity and care.

As we continue to negotiate the role of religion in American law, articulation of the contending positions is valuable. If we set aside abstract principle and simply try to arrange that everyone is okay, it is important to know each party's best case scenario and the reasons for it. This book is best appreciated in those terms, as a statement of one maximalist position.

ANDREW KOPPELMAN, *Northwestern University*.

BRUCE, SCOTT G. *Cluny and the Muslims of La Garde-Freinet: Hagiography and the Problem of Islam in Medieval Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015. 172 pp. \$49.95 (cloth).

Hagiographic texts have long presented historians a challenge because of the perception that they are formulaic and provide little reliable historical evidence. In his book *Cluny and the Muslims of La Garde-Freinet: Hagiography and the Problem of Islam in Medieval Europe*, Scott Bruce challenges this conventional wisdom and demonstrates ways that the various vitae of St. Maiolus of Cluny and related texts can provide insights into religious attitudes in the Middle Ages and, especially, attitudes toward Islam in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In four chapters and an "interlude," Bruce analyzes the reception of the abbot's vitae and other accounts of the abbot's kidnapping by the Muslims of La-Garde Freinet and illustrates how the texts were used by the monks of Cluny, including the abbot Peter the Venerable in the twelfth century, and how those texts shaped attitudes toward Islam into the twelfth century.

In the first two chapters, the strongest part of the book, Bruce examines the kidnapping of Maiolus by Muslim raiders in 972. Bruce first provides a history of the violence and economic opportunity resulting from travel across the Alps and a discussion of the Muslims of La-Garde Freinet and their piracy. He then discusses the ransom letter sent by Maiolus to obtain his release that was included in the earliest vita of the abbot. In the letter Maiolus, drawing from scripture and the Cluniac liturgical tradition, portrayed his captors as "the hordes of Belial" (34) and thus as enemies of God and humankind. Chapter 2 examines other early eleventh-century vitae of Maiolus, including one by Odilo of Cluny, and the history of Rodulphus Glaber. The vitae reveal the continued interest in the life of Maiolus, the evolving attitude toward Islam during the early eleventh century, and the use of saints' lives in ecclesiastical and monastic politics. In comparing lives of Maiolus written by the monks of Pavia and the monks of Cluny, who claimed special ties to the abbot, Bruce demonstrates the ways saints' lives could be manipulated and how those changes reveal important insights about the authors of those changes. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Glaber's account of the kidnapping, which includes a version of Maiolus's letter and the first mention of the name Muhammad in a European text.

Following an "interlude" (63) discussing the Cluniacs in Spain, Bruce offers a new interpretation of the writings of Peter the Venerable and their place in Muslim-

Christian relations. He argues that scholars have both overemphasized the unity of the abbot's polemics against heretics, Jews, and Muslims and mistakenly found in Peter "a tolerant and reasonable voice in the age of the first crusade" (72). Bruce also asserts that it was the vita of Maiolus that shaped Peter's attitudes toward Islam, particularly in the later abbot's pastoral approach, rather than the anti-Muslim polemic of contemporaries.

While Bruce offers important insights into the uses of hagiographic literature and the evolution of attitudes toward Islam in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, his book is not without problems. His treatment of Rodulphus Glaber is one example. Bruce wrongly notes that there is no mention of the kidnapping of Maiolus in the reference work *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*; the episode is discussed in the article on Glaber in that volume. Bruce's account misdates the composition of Glaber's history, noting that much of the material for it was gathered at a stay at Cluny from 1030 to 1035. The first two books and part of the third, however, were written in the mid-1020s, and the rest of the five books of history were written while Glaber was in Auxerre. Bruce also fails to consider Glaber's attention to Muslims in other parts of the history or Glaber's very pronounced apocalypticism, which shaped the monk's belief that Muslims were not only minions of Antichrist but members of a worldwide anti-Christian conspiracy that included heretics and Jews.

This failure to establish the broader context for Glaber can be said of Bruce's discussion of the central figure of the second half of the book, Peter the Venerable. Although demonstrating the importance of the example of Maiolus for Peter's pastoral approach to Muslims, Bruce perhaps overstates that influence at the expense of other influences. As important as the earlier abbot was for Peter, contemporaries like Petrus Alfonsi had a marked influence on Peter the Venerable's approach to Islam. Moreover, like Glaber before him, the Cluniac Peter certainly recognized that a worldwide conspiracy of heretics, Jews, and Muslims existed in his day. Bruce offers a valuable caveat about overstating the programmatic nature of the abbot's writing but goes too far in denying Peter's sense of the interconnection of those groups. Although Peter may not have intended to write two works against the Muslims, as Bruce maintains, the abbot of Cluny certainly intended that a companion volume to his first text be written. His desire was for Bernard of Clairvaux to write that work, but when Bernard did not do so Peter took up the task himself. Finally, Bruce's claim to offer a new approach to Peter the Venerable's attitudes toward Islam does not bear up under closer examination. Bruce's contention that scholars have seen Peter as tolerant and reasonable is a view that was current a generation ago, and scholars working on Peter the Venerable since that time have moved beyond that view.

Despite these reservations, it may be said that Bruce has written a thoughtful and provocative book. Although his arguments concerning Peter the Venerable may not be wholly persuasive, Bruce has demonstrated the importance of the vita of Maiolus on the attitudes of the twelfth-century abbot and raised new ways to think about Peter's approach to Islam. Moreover, Bruce's examination of the vitae demonstrates the value of hagiography for revealing religious attitudes in the Middle Ages and attitudes toward Islam and thus confirms hagiography as an important source for understanding the history of the Middle Ages.

MICHAEL FRASSETTO, *University of Delaware*.

BYRNE, JULIE. *The Other Catholics: Remaking America's Largest Religion*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016. 432 pp. \$29.95 (cloth).

*The Other Catholics* by Julie Byrne is a captivating, in-depth study of independent Catholic communities that describe themselves as "Catholic without the Pope" (8). Byrne estimates the membership of independents in the United States as somewhere between a half million and a million (57). Although these communities are diverse, the vast majority share four principles: "bishops in apostolic succession," seven sacraments, reverence for the saints, and labeling themselves as "Catholic" (8).

This study contradicts long-standing stereotypes of loyal Roman Catholics as "sheep" who passively accept church teachings. Byrne documents that, even before Vatican II, small groups of Catholics formed unsanctioned communities whose protest included "mass in the vernacular by 1750," "revived clerical marriage in 1875," and "consecrat[ion] of a female bishop in 1892" (124).

Byrne emphasizes mainly independent communities on the left because they began centuries earlier than Vatican II, which became the catalyst for the creation of independent communities by conservatives. Byrne also contends that liberals will likely influence the future direction of Catholicism. She has selected communities that have "the loosest structures, the fuzziest boundaries, the wildest mixing, and the sparkiest magic" because they "best illuminate the boundaries of Catholicism" (63).

The author's research draws on multiple methods, including "two major archives, forty-six interviews, and ten years of field notes" (19). She is consistently critical and self-reflective about her role as participant observer, noting that "not only does observation change the observed and the observer," but it is also "part and parcel of the whole" research environment (67).

The emphasis on ordination among independents contradicts calls to end ordination by liberal Roman Catholic intellectuals, including Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Hans Küng. Although some independents criticize ordination, most defend it as "an indelible spiritual mark" whereby the ordained acquire "magic hands" (44). Independents regard this type of "magicalism" as "a healthy corrective to modern disenchantment" (44). Byrne explains that although independents dislike clericalism, they argue that "you can easily have absolute ordination and theological progressivism at the same time" (44).

This study's primary focus is on the Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch-Malabar Rite, which includes "over sixty clerics with thirty charters for 'churches or creative ministries' in thirteen states and five countries" (13). Byrne chose it because it was larger and older than most independent jurisdictions (64). In many respects the Church of Antioch is the polar opposite of Roman Catholicism. Antiochians reject dogma by claiming "complete freedom of thought, interpretation and inquiry in all matters of faith and belief" (211). They also favor worker-priests, who do ministry on a primarily volunteer basis (216). Not surprisingly, some members inevitably seek spiritual guidance, and some priests complain about the burdens of juggling work and ministry. Initially, Antiochians favored open access to ordination, but Antioch's online Sophia Divinity School eventually required criminal background checks and mental health histories, learning the "hard way" the necessity of vetting (214).

The author suggests that independents may serve to "incubate new ideas," similar to the role played by religious orders in earlier historical periods (19). As Rome became increasingly rigid in recent decades, independents moved outside the boundary of the church to innovate. Byrne acknowledges that outsider status is a mixed



blessing in that “what they gain in creativity, mobility, and vibrancy, they lose in strength, stability, and status” (18).

This book ends on a rather ominous note: in 2010 the Church of Antioch split, due in large part to long-standing tension between Antioch priests who remain within the boundaries of liberal Catholicism, and those who favor mixing sacraments with “alternative spiritualities” (64). Eventually some Antiochians formed a new, smaller Antioch Church in Phoenix, Arizona, while most joined the Ascension Alliance in Seattle, Washington. Others joined the Independent Catholic Church of America or Old Catholic Churches.

This book covers most of the significant issues very thoroughly. The only major shortcoming is the lack of critical attention to independents’ claims of mysticism. This omission is significant because mysticism is repeatedly cited as an essential priority of independent communities. Antioch Archbishop Gundrey even identified mysticism as “the highest authority in the church” (227).

For her part, the author acknowledges that mysticism is “the most indeterminate authority of all” (227). So far so good, but how does one evaluate whether claims of mysticism and/or spiritual growth are valid? Antiochians use the nickname “woo-woo” to describe “alternative spiritualities and uncanny phenomena that seem to swirl in church life” (64). Although the author characterizes “woo-woo” as an “affectionate term,” it has ghostlike undertones that suggest artifice or even ridicule (64).

One might question how Antioch’s leaders would measure up if evaluated by models of spiritual development outlined by scholars such as James Fowler or Robert Kegan or Ken Wilbur. In contradiction to these models, Antiochians describe the spiritual search primarily as individualistic rather than communal, and as oriented toward spiritual uplift rather than social justice. In fact, Antioch founder Herman Spruit was “not above being actually ‘embarrassed’ by his priests who engaged in issues of labor, poverty, homelessness, and AIDS,” and claimed that social justice “is not a legitimate concern of religion” (153). Spruit’s views are not shared by all Antiochians, who hold a range of positions on these issues. The author describes Antiochians as more involved in sacramental than social justice, because their primary mission is administering the sacraments to those denied access in other denominations. Nonetheless, their refusal to develop a uniform theology or impose requirements on members inevitably deems questions of justice and morality as individual rather than communal choices.

In conclusion, Byrne’s study is an engaging, highly readable, and comprehensive study of the evolution of independent Catholic communities, and of the challenges and opportunities they have encountered in their efforts to reimagine Catholicism and build alternative models of church.

KATHLEEN KAUTZER, *Emeritus, Regis College.*

CASTEEN, ELIZABETH. *From She-Wolf to Martyr: The Reign and Disputed Reputation of Johanna I of Naples*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015. 312 pp. \$49.95 (cloth).

With her analysis of the reign and reputation of Johanna I, Queen of Naples, Elizabeth Casteen takes up the torch lit by Émile-Guillaume Léonard with his unfinished three-volume study, *Histoire de Jeanne Ire, reine de Naples, comtesse de Provence (1343–1382)*. Casteen skillfully applies the lens of reputation, which, like gender, is a very useful

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tool for analysis. Moreover, because Johanna's historical legacy rests upon two distinct and dichotomous renderings of her, pulling apart, examining, and reconstructing her reign with recourse to her competing reputations is an innovative and effective tool, one that Casteen employs to great effect. Casteen does not seek to cleanse or gild Johanna's reputation; she aims instead to analyze and understand it. Not only does this book deal with the reputation of a pivotal figure of fourteenth-century European history—a regnant queen—it offers us an examination of the cultural and religious mentality of late medieval Europe, thereby making a considerable contribution to religious studies of the period.

In Provence, Countess Jeanne is remembered as having been “pious, courtly, wise, and committed to her subjects’ well-being” (1). This is in large part due to the effective spin-doctoring undertaken by the second house of Anjou for its own geopolitical and territorial imperatives after Johanna's death. In Italy, Johanna is most often remembered as a power-hungry queen who strangled her first husband, seventeen-year-old Andrew of Hungary, on the eve of his joint coronation with her. Italians have also never forgotten her role in the schism of the Western Church (1378–1417). Her subtraction from obedience to the Roman pope, Urban VI, in favor of the Avignon antipope, Clement VII, was a decision that precipitated hardship and crisis throughout Christendom—especially in Italy.

Casteen gives considerable weight to important theological and religious questions that arose during the “calamitous” fourteenth century. Johanna owed her throne to the papacy from which she held her kingdom in fief. In the absence of a surviving legitimate male heir from his own bloodline, one he held to be sacrosanct, Johanna's grandfather, Robert I the Wise (d. 1343), with the considered assent of Clement VI, passed his crown to Johanna. Her elevation was in keeping with Neapolitan laws of inheritance. There was, however, a considerable sticking point: kings of Naples were regarded as “quasi-religious” monarchs (9) endowed with sacerdotal powers and influence. Johanna could not preach, nor could she crusade (9). She therefore had to devise gendered ways by which to cement her status as a monarch who ranked above other sovereigns because of her proximity to the *supreme hierarch*. Johanna did this by targeted patronage and commissions; by her loyal, durable, and meaningful support of the papacy in its political and military endeavors; and by cultivating spiritual friendships with women such as Birgitta of Sweden and Caterina of Siena. Johanna achieved this during the most successful phase of her long reign, from the death of her second husband, Louis of Taranto (1362), to the commencement of the schism (1378). Johanna's exertions and successes on these fronts are deftly brought out into the light and examined by Casteen in chapters 3 and 4.

In chapter 1, Casteen outlines the events leading to the murder of Andrew of Hungary, including Robert's maneuvers to ensure that his sovereignty passed directly and exclusively to Johanna, and the explosive fallout arising from Andrew's brutal and ignominious death (1346). It destroyed the young queen's reputation and branded her a “Neapolitan She-Wolf.” Casteen describes and analyzes the responses and strategies of the papacy, first, in the face of Johanna's refusal to grant Andrew a role in her administration, her disordered court, and her wanton alienation of papal territory to her largely undeserving favorites and, later, in the face of Andrew's murder and the understandable ire of his Magyar relatives. The investigation into the affair was, at the very least, dubious, and Clement VII's continued support of Johanna did not cleanse entirely her damaged reputation. In August 1347, Johanna married Louis of Taranto in secret, without papal dispensation, and fled her kingdom, arriving in Avignon just before the Black Death. In early May 1348, Clement purchased Avignon, which gave Johanna the wherewithal to return to Naples in August 1348. Casteen examines the

means by which Johanna was transformed from legitimate queen to royal monster by her own actions as well as by the gazes and actions of others.

With her second marriage, Johanna was remade from sovereign queen to docile consort. Louis and Naples' grand seneschal, Niccolò Acciaiuoli, worked in concert to deprive Johanna of her authority and her power, but it soon became apparent that Louis had neither the judgment nor the military prowess to be an effective king. Johanna sought the aid and advice of the new pope, Innocent VI, who, unlike his predecessor Clement VI, declined to intervene on Johanna's behalf, urging her to patience and forbearance and offering her spiritual consolation. In chapter 2, Casteen explores how Johanna's time in the wilderness of political isolation, combined with Louis's chaotic rule and Acciaiuoli's gradual support of her, enabled her to rebuild her reputation and credentials for independent rulership. In 1378, Johanna, who held her kingdom in fief from the papacy, became the first European sovereign to recognize Clement VII as pope. Her motivations remain obscure, but what is certain is that her carefully reconstructed reputation and reimagined sovereignty suffered a blow from which she would never recover. In chapter 5, Casteen unravels the threads of Johanna's possible motivations and analyzes the dangerous consequences arising from her decision.

Casteen's study is essential reading for those who seek to understand more about the life, reputation, and times of this enigmatic queen regnant and the important and difficult religious and spiritual questions raised by her reign and by the turbulent times in which she lived.

ZITA EVA ROHR, *Macquarie University*.

CONROY-KRUTZ, EMILY. *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early Republic*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015. xx+244 pp. \$45.00 (cloth).

The Christian missionary movement is complicated. As Emily Conroy-Krutz ably demonstrates, the officials and missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (the Board) discovered this very quickly. In the first decades of their efforts, all sorts of political, cultural, structural, and geographic factors complicated their goal of converting the world to Christianity. Still, Conroy-Krutz argues, American missionaries all shared a common vision that she calls "Christian imperialism." More on that later.

Conroy-Krutz is at her best when describing political complexities, ambiguities, and perplexities that arose as the Board attempted to carry out its vision in a world dominated by Western imperialism. Promoting a formula of Christianity and civilization in their early efforts in India, the Board had hoped to form a cooperative relationship with the British East India Company, but discovered that their interests often collided. Converts were few.

The situations were quite different elsewhere. In Hawaii, the ruling royal class supported missionary efforts, which enabled the Board to build more than nine hundred schools. But when missionaries cooperated with the Hawaiian ruling class to pass laws outlawing prostitution, they ran into opposition from American merchants and sailors, who accused them of meddling in politics. In the American southeast, the Board received official support from the federal government to Christianize and "civilize" the Cherokee people. But when Jacksonians and the state of Georgia pushed for land and Indian removal, the Board found themselves actually



opposing this coercion by their own government. It left the Board puzzled about the proper relationship between missionary work and politics.

In Liberia, missionary John Wilson turned anticolonial. When African-American settlers began claiming land and requiring African Grebo men to serve in the militia without their consent, Wilson set himself in opposition to the Liberian governor and the American Colonization Society. Wilson eventually resettled his ministry in Gabon, hoping he could operate apart from colonial settlements, a hope that proved to be futile. By contrast, missionaries looking to establish a presence in southeast Asia worked out a plan with the British East India Company, which would have allowed them to settle twenty families as a colony in Singapore. Board officials struck down the plan, worrying that these missionaries did not fully understand the political complications of such a venture. Instead, the Board established a printing operation in Singapore, supplying written materials for the region.

This is a book focused on missionaries and their vision of Christian imperialism, which was “thoroughly distinct” from the version of empire promoted by the US military or government (206). As such, *Christian Imperialism* does not substantially engage mission studies or the recent scholarship on world Christianity that explores how non-Western Christians adapted Christianity to their local culture. Conroy-Krutz comes closer to postcolonial studies that view missionaries within the Western imperial project of constructing the “other,” though her work does not spend much time either exploring how non-Christians responded to missionaries or how missionaries depicted non-Westerners.

The concept of Christian imperialism carries its own challenges and conflicts. Conroy-Krutz employs Christian imperialism as a way “to think about unequal power dynamics” (10). However, those power dynamics are more assumed than demonstrated. Indeed, the very dearth of conversions in most places the Board worked suggests that the power dynamics, in the area of religious commitments at least, were not weighted very heavily toward the missionaries. Nor do the occasions when missionaries opposed Western political powers demonstrate unequal power relations, unless it is the lack of political power held by missionaries. Conroy-Krutz states that when Wilson argued for anticolonial policies in Liberia, “he continued to think with the framework of Christian imperialism” (152). It would be helpful to further explore what made him simultaneously anticolonial and imperialistic. Conroy-Krutz additionally describes Christian imperialism as “the spread of Anglo-American culture” (11). Certainly this was often the goal, but what do we do with Board missionaries in India and Singapore who expressed desires that non-Anglos adapt Christianity to their language and customs?

It is true, as Conroy-Krutz indicates, that missionaries could not avoid politics. However, it is worth asking whether this is the same as reifying religion as political power, as *Christian Imperialism* tends to do. When a missionary listed education, social welfare, and the improvement of character as goals of the movement, Conroy-Krutz argues that this “begins to sound more and more like the work of a government” (207). She also declares that “missionaries and their supporters were committed to a kind of Christian imperialism that they thought would make the world a better place by spreading the Kingdom of God,” and adds, “this idea emerged from the politics of the day” (207). There are problems here. Aside from the phrase “Christian imperialism” (which missionaries hardly, if ever, actually used), it is difficult to see how the idea of improving the world through the extension of the Kingdom of God was born during the early republic. After all, in one form or another, this had been a rather popular idea among Christians, in many different contexts, for nearly two millennia. But maybe this claim reflects her point: perhaps any public expression of religion must,

by definition, be politically coercive in some way (even if it is opposed to political coercion).

Though quite helpful in describing political challenges missionaries faced, *Christian Imperialism* is less convincing in its attempt to lay out the core vision of the Board. Conroy-Krutz delves deeply into the primary sources of the Board, but for a thesis grounded in a missionary vision, the work is very thin on scholarship dealing with American religion, evangelicalism, and the American missionary movement. Perhaps this reflects a disciplinary problem within the academy, whereby political historians and religious historians still aren't encouraged to engage one another's scholarship. We could use more of that kind of engagement. The missionary movement was, after all, a complicated affair for missionaries, as it still is for us.

JAY R. CASE, *Malone University*.

CRAWFORD, MATTHEW R. *Cyril of Alexandria's Trinitarian Theology of Scripture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. 304 pp. \$125.00 (cloth).

Since the latter part of the twentieth century, interest has begun to revive among European and Anglophone scholars about the life and work of Cyril, the formidable fifth-century patriarch of Alexandria. Gibbon's account of the late Roman Empire, with all its acerbic bias against the hysterical clerical interference in what he saw as the manly military and political affairs of the Empire, cast a long shadow and dominated Victorian-era scholarship at the time when large collections of patristic translations were being prepared out of Oxford and Union Theological Seminary (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers editions that are still doing the rounds). So it was that several generations of scholars who had predominantly taken their cue from Gibbon, classed Cyril as one of the worst examples in history of the power-mad mul-lah. Protestant Victorian ecclesiastics started to see him as a cipher for contemporary popes; not least after the offense of the Vatican's rejection of Anglican orders. Charles Kingsley, Newman's hostile critic after he converted, added to the fire by penning a lurid novel laying all the blame for the assassination of Hypatia directly on Cyril, who now, as woman-murderer, pope of Alexandria, and rabble-rouser, hardly deserved to be mentioned in polite ecclesiastical circles. So it was that the Victorians punished him by not including one of the greatest patristic minds in their list of early Christian translations. This omission, driven by (at the time undisclosed) ecclesiastical politics, was not only anachronistic but foolish in the extreme. It led to the sidelining of one of antiquity's most acute minds, called by the ancients the *Sphragis* (Seal of the Fathers), and that, in turn, had a profound effect in generations of analysis of patristic Christological, soteriological, and Trinitarian thought. With the recovery of Cyril, most of the older textbooks on these core subjects accordingly stand in need of significant revision. Attentive historical and theological analysis in more recent times, coming from a wide range of scholars of different backgrounds, has consistently showed Cyril's originality, his acute awareness of the streams of the Neoplatonic schools (a reliance on Iamblichus that one would not expect, as Sergey Trostianskiy has shown; *St. Cyril of Alexandria's Metaphysics of the Incarnation* [New York: Peter Lang, 2016]), his synthesizing of several schools of thought before him (Alexandrian and Antiochene), and his profound scriptural mind.

Matthew Crawford contributes significantly to the list of useful new work on Cyril by turning his attention to one of the remaining neglected areas of research: the Pneumatological and Trinitarian aspects of this important theologian. It adds to pioneer-

ing work on the theme completed by Marie-Odile Boulnois (*Paradoxe trinitaire chez Cyrille d'Alexandrie: herméneutique, analyses philosophiques et argumentation théologique* [Paris: Institut d'études augustinienes, 1994]) and Timothy Becker ("The Pneumatology of St. Cyril of Alexandria" [PhD diss., Union Theological Seminary, New York, 2012]), the latter which Crawford does not cite, as he was completing his own research more or less at the same time. Crawford's Durham PhD dissertation has here been very well transformed into a readable and persuasive book. It demonstrates the deep centrality that scripture had for the formation of this ancient thinker's view of the theological cosmos. It serves to the modern reader as a salutary reminder, with numerous examples, of how historical exegesis needs to be understood in antique terms, not dismissed because it does not seem to conform to modern critical axioms. Crawford notes how often earlier, unsympathetic commentators tended to mock the very premises of patristic exegesis as senselessly paradoxical, when they evidently had rarely understood the force of the rhetorical logic being applied; so insistent were they that only contemporary higher critical principles could ever be allowed as legitimate.

Crawford also bears witness, on the basis of a patient and close reading of the texts, that Janssen's and Boulnois's new appreciation of the power of the Cyrilline exegesis were correct, and he reaffirms here that Cyril's biblical interpretation "had a deep coherence and significant level of sophistication" (233). He sees how the works of Didymus affected Cyril's Trinitarian thought and rightly points out the extent to which Cappadocian theology (which Cyril had carefully studied) also impacted his thought. Crawford leans more to Gregory of Nyssa as an influence, though others may see Gregory Nazianzen's influence (both in Trinity and Christology) as more evident. In fact by using the Cappadocian's (and also significant, but unacknowledged) parts of the exegesis of John Chrysostom alongside his own native Alexandrian traditions, Cyril emerges as a major synthetic force in ancient theology. His (apparent) invention of the method of doing theology by preparing *catenae* of patristic citations to justify points (as at the Council of Ephesus in 431) bears this out. Crawford's work therefore adds to the growing amount of evidence that those who elevate Cyril as a prime example of intolerant Alexandrianism are quite mistaken. The overall thesis of the book is to be welcomed as a fine clarification of Cyrilline thought: namely, that his preferred understanding of all biblical interpretation is not *allegoria* (which word set he carefully avoids) but rather *theoria pneumatike*, and that this is not just spiritual vision in the generic sense but rather a visionary understanding conveyed by the spirit's indwelling illumination—that gift of Christ's resurrectional refashioning of human anthropology. In short, all Cyrilline Christology is Trinitarian, and all of it is rooted in the understanding of scripture as Christ's Ecclesial body. The book, with excellent indices and databases, continues the fine standards of others in this important series from Oxford University Press.

J. A. MCGUCKIN, *Columbia University*.

CRISP, OLIVER D. *Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2015. 218 pp. \$25.00 (paper).

*Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians* is a benchmark in the career of one of the most important Edwards scholars today, Oliver Crisp. Not only are the essays presented in this volume groundbreaking, but Crisp's picture of Edwards challenges the popular consensus about the Northampton divine. Nearly every chapter provides revised themes and updated content from Crisp's previous books and articles. Part history



and part constructive theology, *Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians* follows a trend in recent Edwards scholarship of comparative theological analysis (e.g., Kyle Strobel's *The Ecumenical Edwards*), which provides a more robust portrait of Edwards's theology.

It would be a mistake, however, to view this book as a mere recapitulation of Crisp's prior work. On the contrary, he has changed his mind on topics like the Edwardsean trajectory toward pantheism as well as Edwards's innovative model of the Trinity, both of which are reworked throughout the book. Although each chapter is a stand-alone analysis of a particular subject of debate in Edwards scholarship, the theme is clear from the outset: "How orthodox was Edwards's thought?" (xviii). Chapter 1 sets the context for this question by showing that Edwards diverged from the Reformed tradition in several important ways that are then explored throughout the volume.

The second chapter, "Anselm and Edwards on the Doctrine of God," draws continuity between the eleventh-century archbishop and his colonial successor in Augustinianism. This continuity exists in classic perfect-being theology and a particular attribute of that model of God—divine simplicity. Crisp then explores the differences between Anselm and Edwards, chief of which is Edwards's optimism about the faculty of reason's ability to explain the mysteries of Trinitarian theology. This carries over into the third chapter, "Edwards on the Excellence of the Trinity," in which Crisp draws out several tensions in Edwards's model of the Trinity.

Chapters 4, 5, and 7 bring other theologians into conversation with Edwards, which yields surprising results. Crisp shows—quite provocatively for some—that on the doctrine of creation, Jacob Arminius holds a more classic and orthodox position than Edwards can consistently take with his panentheistic and idealistic commitments. To similar effect, John Girardeau is used to prove that Edwards's doctrine of free will is more exotic than the Reformed tradition requires and that libertarian free will is not incompatible with the Reformed confessions. After Crisp's book was published, two more volumes—Philip J. Fisk's *Jonathan Edwards's Turn from the Classic-Reformed Tradition of Freedom of the Will* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016) and Richard A. Muller's *Divine Will and Human Choice* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017)—were published that criticized the use of contemporary philosophical terms like "libertarianism" or "compatibilism" to characterize the Reformed tradition. Both authors advocate for a less anachronistic term to describe the Reformed view of free will (e.g., "synchronic contingency" rather than "libertarianism"). Consequently, while the nature of and proper nomenclature for free will in the Reformed tradition will continue to be the subject of lively debate, there is a developing consensus that Edwards's views on the matter are an anomaly rather than the standard. Finally, Edwards's indirect endorsement of the governmental theory of the atonement for his disciple Joseph Bellamy is investigated and shown not to be in contradiction with his subscription to classic penal substitutionary theory. In chapter 7 and throughout the rest of the book, Crisp does an excellent job of representing Edwards on Edwards's own terms, frequently noting when his interpretation of a primary source might differ from other scholars.

In chapters 6 and 8, Crisp focuses exclusively on Edwards. In the former, the Edwardsean doctrine of original sin is reexamined as Crisp explains the doctrine through four-dimensionalist metaphysics. In an effort to defend the Augustinian version of original sin, Edwards makes a unique and bizarre contribution to hamartiology by recasting the transmission of sin in realist terms. In the latter chapter, Crisp unpacks one of Edwards's most famous sermons, *The Excellency of Jesus Christ*, in order to show how Edwards used modern rhetoric, Lockean simplicity, experiential piety, and idealism to move the affections of his congregants.

Drawing on the evaluation of Princeton theologian Charles Hodge, Crisp reinvestigates the accusation that Edwardsean theology had a pantheistic impulse in his fascinating final chapter, "On the Orthodoxy of Jonathan Edwards." Crisp makes it clear that Edwards pressed the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy to the breaking point, putting him beyond panentheism and into pantheism. However, this ruling must be qualified by two points. First, in order to evaluate the orthodoxy of Edwards, scholars ought to assign a hierarchy to the works that he left behind after his untimely death. Crisp ranks the works published by Edwards within his lifetime first; his nearly completed, posthumously published *Two Dissertations* second; and his unpublished works third (6). This list appears to neglect Edwards's manuscript and outlined sermons, a type of source that does not fit neatly into any of the aforementioned categories. Roughly 90 percent of the primary source material we have from Edwards was not ready for publication, and some he never intended to publish. Consequently, while Crisp's case for Edwards's pantheistic innovation is strong, it ought to be qualified by Edwards's sermonic explanations of God and creation, which are typically conservative. Second, in order to rule on the orthodoxy or heterodoxy of Edwards, scholars ought to agree on a confessional standard for evaluation. This brings out a tension between Crisp's first and last chapter. Crisp employed the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF) in order to prosecute Edwards's doctrine of free will (102–4, esp. n. 46), which makes the absence of a confessional standard in his final chapter unexpected. It may be a given that Edwards's panentheism and occasionalism go beyond the bounds of Westminster, but proving that Edwards in fact denied or radically reinterpreted important articles of the Reformed faith (e.g., WCF 2.I, 3.I, 4.II, 5.II, 9.II–III, 19.I) would have driven Crisp's point home: namely, Edwards was an intellectual seeking to reconfigure Reformed Orthodox theology in a new dress with the help of modern philosophy, and he was, as a result, a highly original thinker (xviii).

To conclude, *Jonathan Edwards among the Theologians* is not an introduction to Jonathan Edwards's theology but an overview of Oliver Crisp's research, which has become a touchstone for Edwardsean scholarship. It serves the student or scholar of Edwards well by plowing new and controversial ground in the field while remaining ever charitable, constructive, and thought provoking. This volume will likely serve as a basis for future discussions about the orthodoxy of Edwards's theology within the Reformed tradition.

C. LAYNE HANCOCK, *New Haven, Connecticut.*

HAIDER, NAJAM. *Shī'ī Islam: An Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014. 266 pp. \$30.99 (paper).

Najam Haider's *Shī'ī Islām* comes as part of a sudden spate of new introductory books on Shi'ī Islam. Until recently, those seeking an introduction to Shi'ism did not have much choice. The three major works available covered very different aspects of Shi'ism: S. H. M. Jafri's *The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979) only covered early Shi'ī history (culminating in the Imamate of the Imam recognized by both Twelver and Ismaili Shi'a, Ja'far al-Šādiq); Mojan Momen's *Introduction to Shi'ī Islam* (Welwyn: George Ronald, 1985) focused purely on the development of Twelver Shi'ism; and Heinz Halm's *Shi'ism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991; first published in German as *Die Schia* [Darmstadt, 1987]) was long the only available option for a work that covered the three major sects of Shi'ism: the Twelvers, the Ismailis, and the Zaydis. Yann Richard's *Shi'ite Islam: Polity, Ideology and Creed* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995; first published in French as *L'Islam chi'ite: Croyances et*

*idéologies* [Paris: Fayard, 1991]) is an enjoyably idiosyncratic (and very French) overview, again focused on Twelver Shi'ism, particularly in its Iranian incarnation.

After this initial spate of surveys produced in the wake of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the flood dried up. Recently, perhaps inspired by the recent exacerbation of sectarian conflict in the Middle East and the historical questions that have inevitably arisen in response, a new flurry of works has appeared, including *Twelver Shi'ism: Unity and Diversity in the Life of Islam, 632 to 1722* (Edinburgh, 2013), by Andrew J. Newman; *A History of Shi'i Islam* (London, 2014), by Farhad Daftary, who was already the author of two excellent surveys of Ismaili Shi'i history and was therefore well positioned to produce a broader introduction to Shi'a Islam more generally; and, most recently, a concise new introduction by Mojan Momen entitled *Shi'i Islam: A Beginner's Guide* (Oneworld: London, 2016), which again focuses on the Twelver Shi'a, although it should not be confused with Momen's earlier work, which still holds its own as a useful introductory and teaching text.

Haider's and Daftary's works offer, like Halm, an overview of all three major denominations of Shi'ism from early times to the present day (although given Halm's inclusion of an admittedly meager four pages on the Zaydis, Haider is not quite accurate in his claim that "unlike previous introductions to Shi'ism, the present work covers the Ismā'īlīs and the Zaydis in addition to the more populous Twelvers"; 4). In tackling the tricky task of juxtaposing the development of these three very different schools of Shi'ism, Haider's book is guided by a very contemporary preoccupation with frameworks of interpretation, in contrast to Halm's and Daftary's rather more positivistic narratives of the facts that make up historical narrative. Thus, Haider structures his book to prioritize the crystallized theology (broadly conceived) of the major Shi'i sects as the major framework that has retrospectively structured the narratives of Islamic history. By teaching his readers the theology first, before we are exposed to the narrative of historical events, Haider emphasizes the fact that the earliest and most important narratives of Islamic history have been fundamentally influenced—some might say generated—in response to the theological and ideological positioning of their recorders. This may dissuade adoption by instructors who are looking for a simple narrative of historical events, but Haider's perspectival, theological, and narratological approach makes it a useful corrective to the Sunni-normative framework of many introductory works on Islam as a whole, giving students a swift and clear primer on the deeply subjective process of history formation. The second section on "Origins" alone could be valuably added to the reading list of any introductory course on Islam as a means of exhibiting the basic narrative details of early history accepted by all Muslims, while efficiently exploding the notion that there can be any single stable and uncontested narrative for what happened to the Muslim community in the first generations after Muḥammad.

One potential problem with Haider's approach is that early Islamic history is presented as a *fait accompli* in which the classical crystallized theological formations are taken for granted. Part of the thrill of reading and teaching the early history of sect and school formation in early Islam is the sense of what might have been had any one of the myriad opposition movements been more successful in asserting its power against the status quo. Haider's move in presenting the crystallized Shi'i theology as the major framework through which to view earlier events removes the sense of unbounded possibility in the progression through history. Yet, this book will be very useful for those who want to use it as an introduction to the three major sects of Shi'i Islam in the present day, enabling one to view history more or less as a contemporary believer might understand it. Although Haider does not spend much time in outlining the history of modern Shi'ism, he carefully outlines some of the major narrative elements of early history and the way they have been construed in modern



times. Thus, he analyzes the early formation of the most emotionally charged narrative of Shi'i history and a central focus of piety for Shi'a the world over: the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn in the "Origins" section. Haider then returns to Ḥusayn in chapter 10, "The Politicization of the Twelver Shi'a," describing the apoliticized, pietistic version of the Ḥusayn narrative presented by Ḥusayn Va'iz Kāshifī (d. 1504) and supported by Persian kings until the twentieth century and its replacement by Shariati's politicized, revolutionary reading of the Ḥusayn story, which emphasized Ḥusayn's stance against an unjust status quo as a precursor to Iranian struggles against a Western-backed Shah. In this way, Haider provides readers with a graphic demonstration of the way in which historical narratives are always in motion, always being put to some purpose in the way they are retold and redeployed.

Haider's work, then, is well written, concise, and clearly structured and appropriate for use both in history and religious studies. What we still lack, however, is a truly in-depth overview of the development of Shi'i Islam dealing with all three sects (an undertaking that would require at least three volumes) or any kind of introductory monograph to Zaydī Islam (something perhaps that Haider himself would be best placed to produce) or, for that matter, a decently detailed introduction to Twelver Shi'ism comparable to Daftary's detailed 772-page overview of Ismailism, *The Ismā'īlīs: Their Histories and Doctrines* (New York: Cambridge, 1990). In spite of the welcome rush of new introductory surveys, the field of Shi'i studies still has a long way to go to produce even the most basic materials.

HAYES EDMUND, *Leiden University*.

HASELBY, SAM. *The Origins of American Religious Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 352 pp. \$74.00 (cloth).

This book argues that American religious nationalism—defined, more or less, as the enduring religious inflection to the idea of what America is imagined to mean—developed in the reconciliation of a conflict between two factions of early national Protestantism. Sam Haselby pits "a popular, anti-elitist frontier revivalism" against "a bourgeois and nationalist metropolitan missionary" (22). The historiography of religion in America in the nineteenth century has too often lumped these factions together as "evangelicals," ostensibly because of a shared interest in spreading the gospel of Protestant Christianity (24). Haselby brings their conflicts—organized along lines of geography and class—to the fore, and this is the book's primary, important contribution.

Haselby's further arguments about the significance of this conflict, though, rely on a number of assumptions about the early national period that are difficult to accept. He maintains that in the first decades of independence the federal government, made weak by the self-serving efforts of Southern slaveholders, "surrendered the governance of the frontier to the popular Protestant upstarts and the North-eastern missionaries" (31). What "governance" actually means in this context is never made clear, however. In the end, for Haselby, the idea that religious leaders "governed" the frontier seems to mean that they suggested some sort of moral order. Among frontier denominations, Haselby spends the most time on Methodists, suggesting that "on the frontier of the early republic, no one provided more pastoral care and social regulation—certainly not any state institution—than the Methodists" (8). It isn't clear—especially after Haselby's opening chapter covering the secular-state aspirations of many of the nation's founders—why "pastoral care" would qualify as "governance" in

the early nineteenth century. Social regulation, meanwhile, seems like—and has been widely argued to be—both a religious goal and a national one.

Distinguishing between these goals—answering the question of how, exactly, the cultivation of behavioral norms by religious hierarchies on the frontier related to the enforcement of laws by the notionally secular state—would have required engaging with primary documents of daily Methodist life on the frontier, which Haselby steadfastly refuses to do. His chapter on Methodism relies on a hodgepodge of secondary work and, most bewilderingly, a twentieth-century literary reminiscence about life among revivalist preachers around 1900.

The difficulty of parsing religious and national goals is most acute in Haselby's assertion that Andrew Jackson brought the two threads of early national Protestantism together, combining "an anti-elitist discourse developed by frontier revivalists in opposition to the missions movement" and "the providential nationalism of the missions movement" (3). This way of understanding Jackson is intriguing. Recognizing the importance of this combination, though, depends on accepting, with Haselby, that frontier revivalism prior to Jackson had nothing to do—either overtly or, apparently, by implication—with a burgeoning American "national consciousness" (160). By any measure, this is a difficult argument to accept. Historiographical understandings of the relationship between religion and politics in this era have been largely defined by Nathan Hatch's argument, in *The Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), that the republican spirit of the Revolution animated frontier religion. Amanda Porterfield, in *Conceived in Doubt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), has offered an important counterargument—that the religious figures Hatch valorizes manipulated early national religious and political culture to their own ends. Whichever view one accepts, both make it plain—by careful recourse to early national sources—that there is no way to untangle early national Protestant ideals and goals from political, nationalist ones. Haselby, meanwhile, insists that until religion and politics were brought into hypostatic union by Jackson, the "anti-elitist discourse developed by frontier revivalists" was aimed only at religious elites, utterly distinguished from political elites.

If the core problems of the book are held in abeyance, however, it is possible to see Haselby's real contributions. Chapter 4 is a detailed, thick study of the storied Cane Ridge revival and its aftermath that places important emphasis on the struggle among revivalist preachers, nationalizing missionaries, and—crucially—the Shawnee. Haselby admirably charts the development of the ideal society promulgated by northeastern missionaries from "a modestly prosperous New England township, with republican commitments and dominated by an elite steeped in neoclassicism and Reformed Protestantism" into "a more stark and capacious form of liberalism, one that emphasized economic growth and political rights" (267). In what is definitely the best line of the book, Haselby describes the way that elite Protestants met their frontier counterparts' attitude toward inequality—"the last shall be first, and the first last"—with a modified version of their own New England tradition's tolerance for hopefully moderate but ultimately ineluctable differences among social classes: "It was a kind of 'the first shall be first, and the last remain last, but glowing' hybrid of liberalism and Protestantism" (268).

Haselby's carelessness with sources and with language mar the book's more interesting moments. Haselby's writing is given to unfortunate superlatives and free associations: nineteenth-century American Methodism was "one of the great growth stories in the history of religion" (7). Non sequiturs involving facts, opinions, and half-truths abound: one preacher was an ancestor of Adlai Stevenson (fact, apparently); early American literature is "of greater historical than literary interest" (opin-

ion); “the printing of religious literature and Bibles had been rare in colonial America” (true with respect to bibles; very wrong with respect to religious literature [117; 6; 260–61]). Haselby repeatedly refers to some eighteenth-century figures as “antiracist,” a cringe-worthy anachronism when no explanatory context is provided (6). On the next-to-last page of the book he baldly states that, “in the Catholic and Jewish tradition, the text means what the priest or rabbi says it means,” a shockingly facile regurgitation of Protestant assumptions about others’ approaches to scripture. Underscoring the almost complete absence of women in this book, Haselby is the rare contemporary historian who occasionally uses “men” when he means “people” (236).

All of this said, Haselby’s elaboration of the meaningful conflict between popular frontier evangelicalism and the elite, northeastern missionizing establishment is an important contribution. Regardless of its flaws, because of this book’s sweep and scale, we will be grappling with it for some time.

SETH PERRY, *Princeton University*.

HESS, LINDA. *Bodies of Song: Kabir Oral Traditions and Performative Worlds in North India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. xii+467 pp. \$99.00 (cloth).

Typically remembered for his trenchant social criticism, the fifteenth-century bhakta Kabir is also a poet of love, longing, and spiritual angst. Social criticism and spiritual quest are intertwined in Kabir’s sensibility. Note that he was never seen merely as a marginalized satirist in his society. This image is constructed by colonial modernity. Even today, Kabir continues to be a veritable divinity for Kabirpanthis and a very revered figure for many others—a fact again underlined by this fascinating study of Kabir’s living oral tradition.

Linda Hess is widely recognized as Kabir’s best English translator. Her engagement with him goes back to the eighth decade of the twentieth century, when she, in collaboration with Shukdeo Singh, published a translation of the *Bijak* (*The Bijak of Kabir* [San Francisco: North Point, 1983]). Gradually, her interest shifted from the textual to the oral-performative tradition of Kabir’s poetry. This book is the report of her observations and reflections on the spiritual, religious, and political in the background of the oral-performative tradition in the Malwa region of central-western India, focusing on eminent Kabir singer Prahlad Singh Tipanya.

What a unique report this is. Just as Kabir is a poet constantly in conversation with his audience, this book too is situated in an ongoing conversation with the listener of Hess’s exhilarating story, with her fellow academics and with what is described by her as “Kabir culture” (276).

In Kabir’s worldview, the inner and outer worlds of human consciousness are intertwined—the profound truth lies in the “word flowing constantly inside and outside” (*bhitar bahar sabad nirantar*). But until today, most of his admirers have been focusing on only one aspect. The Kabirpanthis are concerned with his spiritual/religious side, and his secular and progressive admirers with the social and political.

Hess seeks to reiterate the constant flow of Kabir’s concern across both these worlds. *Bodies of Song* shines brilliantly in academic rigor, making significant interventions into the debates around Kabir’s ideas, the authenticity of texts, and various theories of orality, but the more audible voice is certainly that of a personal search, coming across via personal notes, diary entries, conversations, and of course poignant memories of a relationship formed during the course of a research project that metamorphosed into a journey covering physical and metaphysical spaces. At the outset, Hess recalls Kurosawa’s *Rashomon*, not to draw what for some is a tempting conclu-



sion, that “truth is inaccessible and irrelevant,” but to underline her conviction “that in the maze of narratives, truth is somehow hovering, and we are still responsible for discovering it” (8).

In the nineteenth century, many were convinced about the inevitability of religion becoming gradually but surely marginalized in the social and psychological life of humankind. But now we are in the midst of a frightening return of religious fanaticism. Reflecting on truth that is “somehow hovering” in this phenomenon is an important intellectual task, and Hess’s book contributes significantly to this. She situates her encounter with the Kabir culture of Malwa in a wider perspective, which has as points of reference Lenin’s discomfort with the bliss of Beethoven’s *Appassionata*, Von Donnersmarck’s film *The Lives of Others*, the Civil Rights movement in United States, negro spirituals, Zen Buddhism, a brief interlude on Tipanya’s guru-ship, and religious tension and violence in India.

To Hess, “spirituality” refers to “(1) an inner-directed process of cultivating self-knowledge and alleviating suffering; and (2) an impulse to break free from the narrow bounds of self-centered individuality, to know one’s connection to all living beings, to nature, to matter and energy” (357). Her definition may or may not satisfy all, but one needs to have some sense of “spiritual” in order to appreciate Kabir, who is undeniably trying to articulate spiritual angst outside the parameters of organized religion, even if his vocabulary is drawn from religious traditions. Hess is quite right in her surmise about the central theme in Kabir’s poems, “The fundamental reality you are looking for is within you, right in your body” (39).

What happens when you completely ignore Kabir’s spiritual side comes out poignantly in Hess’s encounter with an activist who is moved by Kabir’s declaration of fearlessness in a famous song (“nirbhay nirgun ke gun”) but is quite innocent of the context of this declaration. When told by Hess, “It is all about Yoga practice,” the conversation comes to an end (308).

The poignancy of this book lies in the author’s attempt to engage sympathetically even with this instrumentalist attitude. Of course, there are also activists who recognize that if there were no spiritual side to Kabir, “We would have never heard of him” (306).

Hess’s humility with her subject(s) marks her perspective. Any modern person is bound to feel uncomfortable with Kabir’s ideas about women, which at times, go to the extent of glorifying widow burning. Hess and her collaborator Shabnam Virmani wanted such references erased from the performances but learned from a group of Kabirpanthi women: “We are not fools. We don’t plan to jump on our husbands’ funeral pyres. . . . To us, this image is about courage and devotion” (102).

Incidentally the word “Sati” connotes precisely this: courage and devotion. Its collapse into a referent of widow burning is in itself an instructive historical tale. But Hess shows that people’s ways of negotiating religious injunctions in everyday life contribute to the evolution of religion; as Tipanya’s wife Shantiji declares confidently, “When you live here and experience all the things mentioned in the bhajans, understanding comes naturally” (150).

Hess decodes (for the uninitiated) the experience, confidence, and wisdom of ordinary men and women of India. She shows us how people have been living out their inner and outer lives and how they have been enriching further the traditional “bodies of song” through performance. By this decoding, Hess has made a lasting contribution to our understanding of some of the most poignant aspects of Indian religiosity.

PURUSHOTTAM AGRAWAL, *ITM University, Gwalior.*

JOHNSON, SYLVESTER A. *African American Religions, 1500–2000: Colonialism, Democracy, and Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 438 pp. \$32.99 (paper).

Sylvester Johnson's ambitious and important study places colonialism and empire at the center of a narrative account of religion and people of African descent. Indeed, the book's subtitle might be a more appropriate title, with the religious implications of "colonialism, democracy, and freedom" a primary concern, and cases from African and African American religious history serving to illustrate the intertwining of religion, race, and varieties of unfreedom. In this sense, the book delivers less than the title promises, as it is not principally a survey of "African American religions" from the sixteenth through twentieth centuries, although it does examine many significant moments, movements, events, and figures in this history. At the same time, the title undersells what Johnson offers, which is a theoretically sophisticated, broad-ranging discussion of colonialism, race, and empire that attends carefully to but extends beyond a focus on African American religions. In this way, Johnson offers fresh insight into African and African-diaspora religious history by highlighting the impact of colonial formations and exercises of power on their development and expressions. The secondary scholarship that grounds the project is broad-ranging and Johnson offers nuanced readings of primary sources as well as original theoretical frames.

Johnson argues that, in addition to viewing colonialism as marked by the relation of an imperial center to its geographically distant peripheries, we must understand it as an exercise of power that can also take place within a given geographic space. This approach exposes the United States to analysis as a colonial enterprise and highlights internal colonialism as critical to understanding the religious experiences of peoples of African descent and other racialized peoples within US borders. Moreover, this frame extends the temporal parameters of the religious-encounter model that has become common in challenge to earlier works that rendered the story of American religion primarily as one of white Christians. Focusing on encounters, scholars of early-American religion have shown the dynamics of religious exchange among Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans, and have revealed the agency of Native and African peoples in rejecting, adopting, or transforming Christianity. Johnson's work emphasizes the inescapable power of colonialism in framing these religious encounters, well beyond the period of early America, and shows how it set the terms for the production of group identity in relation to religion.

Indeed, Johnson defines race itself as "colonial governance administered through the frame of essential differences among human populations" (88). Moreover, he contends, because "Western Christendom" and European and American colonialism have been intimately connected, we must attend to the religious dimensions of racial construction and racialized practices. Johnson's definition of race as solely the exercise of colonial governance obscures the ways in which, once formed, racial categories produce identities and cultural forms that, while located in a colonial context, can serve purposes beyond the political. In addition, his understanding of race as governance leads him to mobilize the racial category of "white" from the start of his narrative, in contrast to recent literature that attends usefully to a more nuanced history of the development and transformations of whiteness. Nevertheless, his emphasis on religion and colonialism, rather than phenotype, as the source of racial categories makes important contributions to the growing body of literature on race and religion.

The book's first part examines the expansion of European empire in West Africa and the Americas, charting commercial developments grounded in the extraction of resources, including in the form of enslaved African peoples; the formation of structures of colonial governance; and the particular religious formations that emerge from the encounter of people Johnson understands as Christian supremacists and practi-

tioners of indigenous religions. Johnson argues that one significant result of this religious encounter embedded in a web of commerce and colonialism was European commentators' promulgation of the idea that African religion was characterized by fetish worship. He shows how the mistaken notion that Africans believed material things to be divine and rightly objects of worship, rather than conduits for or containers of divine power, fueled charges of idolatry and shaped more general discourses about religion among Europeans.

The second part turns to the United States and discussion of the consolidation of white racial rule under the settler colonialism of the US government; the development of black missionary colonialist projects in Nova Scotia, Sierra Leone, and Liberia; abolitionism; and the participation of African Americans in US imperialist projects. Johnson's analysis of what scholars commonly call emigrationism as, in fact, black settler colonialism is illuminating of more complex power dynamics in black mission and colonization than much scholarship in African American religious history generally recognizes. Here it would have been useful for him to address more fully how his definition of race as colonial governance played out in these contexts of encounter between African Americans and Africans or other US colonial subjects.

The third part examines the rise of state surveillance and repression of African American religious groups, including the Church of God in Christ, the Moorish Science Temple, and the Nation of Islam, and civil rights and black liberation groups, through which the US government rendered them extremist dangers to the integrity of white Christian civilization. Johnson also attends to the security state's racialization of Islam in the post-9/11 United States through a similar deployment of discourses of civilizational threat and the exercise of colonial power.

One of the most important aspects of Johnson's expansive account is his commitment to interrogating the complexity of religious responses by people of African descent to being made colonial subjects, both outside and inside the territory of the United States. Rather than assuming black Christians to have inevitably embraced and promoted inclusive formulations of freedom, as is often the case in scholarship on African American Protestantism, Johnson attends both to those who rejected the terms of US Christian empire as well as to those people of African descent who embraced racialized discourses of religion and civilization and subjugated others in order to join the ranks of the empowered. This is a challenging text that scholars interested in religion and colonialism, African American religious history, US religious history, and Atlantic world history will find enormously valuable.

JUDITH WEISENFELD, *Princeton University*.

KIM, REBECCA Y. *The Spirit Moves West: Korean Missionaries in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 239 pp. \$24.95 (paper).

In this timely book, Rebecca Y. Kim explores the fascinating rise of "reverse missions" by South Korean Protestants aimed at re-evangelizing the West, particularly the United States, since the 1970s (4). The story of reverse missions by Korean missionaries is part of the larger "u-turn" (4) of missionizing activity by Christians residing in the Global South (such as Latin America and Africa, where 60 percent of Christians now reside). As one of Asia's "Protestant Superpowers" (2), South Korea, second only to the United States in the numbers of missionaries it sends abroad, provides an ideal case for studying this phenomenon, and the book illuminates much about South Korean Christianity, globalization of Christianity, the politics of missionizing, and East-West relations.



Kim's work, conducted between 2008 and 2011, is based on research in the largest nondenominational missionary-sending agency in South Korea, the University Bible Fellowship (UBF), and consists of four years of interviews, participant observations, and surveys conducted mainly in UBF chapters in South Korea and the United States but also in chapters in other countries. Her goal is to examine why and how Korean missionaries have pursued missions in the United States and to trace the evolution of this missionary movement. The book is organized into seven chapters plus an introduction and conclusion, and it investigates some of the key techniques used by the Korean missionaries, along with their consequences.

One of the key analytic foci of the book is to interrogate the issue of Korean missionaries' targeting of white Americans—considered to be the “real” Americans—as converts. Kim traces the missionaries' efforts to build racially diverse congregations with white Americans and the effectiveness of these efforts. Kim makes the following central arguments. First, South Korean evangelicals are what she refers to as “Hyper-Korean Evangelicals,” Christians who are not carbon copies of white American evangelicals but Koreanized versions who embody an intense, biblical, and conservative evangelical faith shaped by Korean culture and historical context (17). This Koreanized version of missionary activity includes extraordinary evangelical zeal, accompanied by a fervent belief in dogged hard work and self-sacrifice as “Soldiers of Christ” in the service of spiritual battles to save souls and raise disciples (72). This technique is also shaped by a Confucian-influenced hierarchical, conformist, military-like organizational system that pushes intensely aggressive evangelism. Second, Kim argues that the motives and methods that powered the Korean missionaries' pursuit of missions in the United States, particularly the focus on evangelizing white Americans, demonstrates the enduring influences of what she calls the paradigm of “American global Christianity” that consists of three components: (1) American neo-imperialism; (2) American forms of white-dominated, racially segregated Protestant evangelical Christianity that remain influential in the United States and abroad; (3) a white supremacist racial hierarchy that is embedded in both American imperialism and American Christianity (9).

Using this conceptual and theoretical framework, Kim illustrates that despite their purported efforts to re-evangelize and “save” (16) America and to turn themselves from a poor and subjugated “Rice Christians” into religious “history makers” on the world stage (60), South Korean missionaries and their practices are implicated in unequal racial dynamics between South Korea and the United States and between South Korean Christianity and white American Christianity. Kim describes the ways in which Korean missionaries, in order to attain success from this position of subordination, encountered and endured all manner of racist condescension from white Protestants but nonetheless went out of their way to attract white American recruits, employing methods such as changing their appearance to look more Western (such as requiring male missionaries to get hair permanents), taking Western Christian names, and, in the early stages of missionizing, banning the usage of Korean language at church services, avoiding Korean food, and even disassociating with other Koreans outside of the UBF. Despite these efforts, these missionaries were criticized by Americans for being “cultlike,” authoritarian, demanding, and exclusivist, charges similar to those made against Korean “cults” such as the “Moonies” (118). Kim thus finds that in comparison to the amount of sacrifice the Korean missionaries put in to converting white Americans, the returns on the efforts in no way matched their sacrifices.

The final section of the book examines the evolution of the Korean mission movement in America; here, Kim finds that the UBF and Korean missionaries in general are increasingly led by the second generation and becoming more Americanized to increasingly resemble American evangelical Christianity in worship and practice.

These missionaries now network widely with American evangelical institutions and are losing much of their sectarian qualities and becoming more “church-like” (164). The irony, however, is that by making themselves appear more acceptable within American evangelical institutional and cultural context, they have made it harder, not easier, to evangelize Americans since there is little reason for Americans to join churches full of Korean immigrants or Korean Americans who try to mimic white evangelical churches. Kim argues that examining how UBF mission efforts have evolved for nearly four decades in America confirms the forecast that the more “spirit-filled” and sect-like Global South congregations will become more formal and church-like over time (164). Kim sees this “cool down” process as the current and future trajectory of the UBF in America (164). These observations inform Kim’s main conclusion that since reverse missionizing by Christians from the Global South can never be free of the power imbalance between the Western churches and themselves, the Global South Christians will never be able to conduct their missionizing from any position of superiority or privilege that would make them more successful than they have been. Their missionizing efforts will always be quixotic.

This is a highly informative book that would benefit any student of religion. My only quibble is that not enough narratives of American converts were incorporated into the book; these would offer us a better understanding of the firsthand responses of the converts and the long-term consequences of the missionizing on the converts. The converts’ responses would also enable us gain deeper insights about the struggles and effectiveness of the Korean missionaries. At the end, Kim also raises an intriguing question about the role of Korean missionaries operating in other Global South nations as a “subimperial” power, using South Korea’s current position of economic, technological, and cultural ascendancy on the global stage in relation to other “developing” nations (173). I would have liked to hear more about this. Aside from these minor quibbles, this clearly written, well-organized book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on missionizing and the globalization of religion.

KELLY H. CHONG, *University of Kansas*.

LAMBERT, DAVID A. *How Repentance Became Biblical: Judaism, Christianity, and the Interpretation of Scripture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 280 pp. \$74.00 (cloth).

In *How Repentance Became Biblical*, David A. Lambert presents a highly sophisticated and provocative study of the place of repentance in ancient Israelite literature. Lambert challenges the scholarly consensus, asserting that a discourse around repentance in which individual introspection, remorse over wrongdoing, and a change of heart are highlighted as vital for affecting spiritual reconciliation with the divine is post-biblical. It does not really figure in the Hebrew Bible, not even in prophetic literature. Nor does it appear in most of Second Temple literature, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the overwhelming bulk of New Testament writings. It is only because of the central role repentance plays in Judaism and Christianity that ancient and modern interpreters have read repentance into the texts.

The significance of Lambert’s work goes far beyond the constricted issue of repentance. It touches on the entire configuration of ancient biblical literature as centered on educating the individual toward what is referred to in Hebrew literature as *avoda shebalev*, the service of the heart. In Lambert’s reading, biblical literature is focused on constructing divine power and authority rather than promoting human inwardness and self-improvement. Even more, his work challenges the very assumption that the

ancient writers shared our basic conception of the moral self. In this, his work overlaps with some of the recent writing of Carol A. Newsom (see the essays in her honor in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 40, no. 1 [2015]). The work also has important, if unexplored, theological ramifications, for it implies that the conception of God as vitally concerned with the moral development and inner devotion of his devotees is very late.

In the first section of his work, Lambert provides an enlightening analysis of fasting (chap. 1), prayer (chap. 2), and confession (chap. 3). Rather than seeing in these acts expressions of some supposedly requisite inner remorse, Lambert suggests that we understand them as symbolic gestures of appeal in relation to disaster. Confession, for example, should be construed as a juridical-like speech act that identifies disaster as the product of sin in relation to a named deity. This naming places the deity in a position to affirm his status by removing the sin/disaster. Of course, fasting, prayer, and confession can all be accompanied by a painful guilty conscience, but it is not the point of these acts to express it.

Part 2 offers a diachronic analysis of the biblical root *shuv* (chap. 4) and a revisionist account of the nature of prophetic literature (chap. 5). Lambert convincingly shows that biblical *shuv* is often used to refer to a turn or appeal to God rather than a “return” to an earlier state of covenantal obedience. More problematic is Lambert’s treatment of exilic and postexilic texts, where the new idea of “turning away from sin” comes to fore (86). The focus in these texts, Lambert insists, is still not on a mental resolution toward reform but on the physical removal from God’s sight of an odious irritant, sin. With the irritant removed, even if just temporarily, God can respond positively to a plea for mercy. Particularly challenging and somewhat overstated is Lambert’s contention that prophetic literature in all stages of development is not properly conceived as exhortation toward moral reform. The prophetic oracle is chiefly one of unequivocal doom that is brought into effect by its oral pronouncement. The function of its emphasis on sin is simply to identify the Israelite God as the powerful retributive source of Israel’s disaster. The final literary production also served the needs of theodicy alone and did not belong to a program of reform.

Finally, in part 3 of the book Lambert brings his nonpenitential hermeneutic to bear on late Second Temple literature (apocalyptic texts, the Dead Sea Scrolls, New Testament). He maintains that expectations of redemption in this literature predominantly focus on divine agency in relation to a re-creation of humanity that is not dependent on repentance (chap. 6). Repentance in the contemporary sense emerges under the influence of Hellenistic moral philosophy, as part of a new personal piety, making its first real appearance in Hebrew literature in Ben Sira (161) and later, in Greek, in Philo. And it achieves normative status in early Christian and rabbinic literature.

Lambert engages authoritatively with a wide range of ancient literatures and offers insightful analyses and creative new readings. Sometimes, however, he overstates his case. He refers, for example, to the “impossibility in ancient Israel of self-judgment (as we see it today) as a product of didactic engagement and interior realization” (64). One wonders, then, why Lev. 19:17 bothers calling on the wronged individual to remove hatred from his heart and rebuke his neighbor. Similarly, one wonders why a deity so uninterested in human interiority is so often depicted testing his devotees in order to learn what lies in their hearts. Most problematic, in Lambert’s desire to situate a repentance of remorse within the Hellenistic milieu, he seems to feel compelled to deny any significant intimation of concern with religious interiority and moral improvement outside it. The result is sometimes strained. For example, Lambert renders Jon. 3:10 as follows: “God saw their [present] deeds (for they had turned away from their evil ways) and God renounced the punishment” (28). Following this under-



standing, God revoked his punishment of the Ninevites not because of the “deeds” of fasting and crying out to God, deeds that gave expression to their remorse and determination to live differently, but only because their *present* deeds were no longer sinful. That which is out of God’s sight is out of God’s mind. Yet the sustained emphasis on the submissive activities of the Ninevites immediately before this verse makes this reading unlikely. More likely, the narrator sought to emphasize that the external acts of the Ninevites were efficacious specifically because they indicated to God an internal, mental resolution, in accordance with the passage in Joel 2:13, “and rend your hearts and not your garments.” In general, it is difficult to escape the sense that a somewhat more generous and less one-sided approach might have resulted in a greater appreciation of the real, if limited, place of moral repentance and the worship of the heart in biblical literature.

In spite of certain problems, there can be little doubt that this extremely impressive work will challenge the thinking of scholars of biblical and related literatures for quite some time.

DAVID FRANKEL, *Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies*.

LAWRENCE, LOUISE J. *Sense and Stigma in the Gospels: Depictions of Sensory-Disabled Characters*. Biblical Refigurations. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. x+195 pp. \$27.95 (paper).

Louise J. Lawrence’s *Sense and Stigma* is a creative piece of scholarship situated at the disciplinary crossroads of ethnography, cross-cultural sensory anthropology, disability studies, and biblical studies. In an introduction (1–9), five chapters (10–123), a conclusion (124–31), and endnotes (133–66), Lawrence attempts to “refigure characters with sensory disabilities featured in the Gospels and provide alternative interpretations of their condition and social interaction” (2). Lawrence’s procedure throughout is to juxtapose narratives (sometimes “imaginatively and creatively” [9] or “teasingly” [103]) from the canonical Gospels that center on characters with sensory disabilities of various kinds (chap. 4 being an exception to this organizing principle) with “ethnographic accounts which document the stories of those experiencing similar rejection on account of perceived sensory ‘difference’ in diverse cross-cultural settings” (2).

Chapter 1 critiques existing disability and biblical studies of the senses; chapter 2 refigures the sensory capacities of sightless characters (primarily those in Mark 8:22–26, 10:45–52, and John 9:1–34) and critiques the metaphorical motif of “blindness” in an effort to “militantly subvert sighted norms and hermeneutical frameworks” (47); chapter 3 imagines Jesus and the “deaf-mute” of Mark 7:31–35 as Deaf performance artists, emphasizing the medium of their interaction; chapter 4 argues that the leper (Mark 1:40–45/Matt. 8:1–4/Luke 5:12–15) and the “leaky woman” of the synoptics (Mark 5:25–34/Matt. 9:20–22/Luke 8:43–47), along with the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1–20/Luke 8:26–39), were subject to haptic censorship and olfactory stigma; and chapter 5 casts the story of the boy with seizures (Mark 9:17–29/Matt. 17:14–20/Luke 9:37–43) as an illness narrative and argues that Jesus and the crowd are also marked with “seizure signifiers” (129). This book is a lively contribution to the small but growing body of work on biblical sensory criticism, and in my judgment is likely to succeed in “help[ing] exegetes acknowledge their own sensorial biases” (9), one of its stated goals. Nevertheless some of the book’s arguments lead the exegete also to raise a few critical queries, and it is these that will comprise the remainder of this review.

For instance, a major goal of Lawrence's book is to recover "the strategies, identities, and experiences" (127) of sensory-disabled or otherwise marginalized characters from the Gospels. In her words, "the main aim of the following chapters is to refigure various 'sensory-disabled' characters from a disability consciousness perspective, informed particularly by ethnographic studies; this hopefully will allow some of their strategies, agencies, and identities, which are so often lost behind a label of 'disability,' to come to the fore" (7–8). One question that looms large but is not addressed explicitly by Lawrence is the degree to which "*their* strategies, agencies, and identities" (emphasis added) can be "recovered" (cf. her language of "recovery" at 63, 127). To what degree are there stories of real individuals behind the characters? What is the relationship between literary characters and real people, and can one recover the "agencies" and "identities" of the latter from the former? Lawrence is clearly attuned to narrative strategies and appreciates them as such, but often her argument suggests that for her the "experiences" of these characters, whose "strategies" are often deemed "subversive" by Lawrence (cf. 8, 91, 94, 121), have agendas that are straightforwardly comparable to those of the subjects of modern ethnographic study.

This raises a further question: to what degree do the Gospel authors' agendas or literary habits matter for such an analysis? The omission of sustained attention to the matter is likely to puzzle readers who are accustomed to reading for the motifs, redactional features, and theological inclinations that characterize a given Gospel text. For instance, in chapter 3 Lawrence takes the "deaf-mute" to be "verbally and ideologically" (62) silenced within the narrative in Mark 7:31–37 because he is "denied" direct speech, and it is instead the onlookers whose words are recorded (7:36–37). Absent from Lawrence's discussion is the fact that Jesus is depicted as forbidding any such proclamation (7:36), a detail that connects this story to the Markan motif of silence and secrecy. The reader is left to wonder whether the absence of direct speech is as significant as Lawrence would have it. What is more, it is not clear that the man is a victim of verbal silencing, since the author of the Gospel has just written that the man "was speaking plainly" (7:35), a fact noted but downplayed by Lawrence (62) in her efforts to expose the "hearing/verbal agendas of commentators" (63).

Another area in need of more explicit comment are the grounds for comparing modern ethnographies with the ostensible experiences of characters in ancient literature. For instance, in her treatment of olfactory stigma in chapter 5, Lawrence's discussion of the leper acknowledges that the majority of scholars reject a connection between Hansen's disease and the biblical skin conditions dubbed leprosy but nevertheless presumes a depiction of pathology that aligns with the symptoms of Hansen's disease when she suggests an odoriferous quality to the biblical leper's condition (79). Ironically, if the leper had suffered from Hansen's disease, then his tactile capacities would have been affected (i.e., he would have been "touch-unable"), something that Lawrence denies (76). Similarly, Lawrence wishes to suggest, by analogy with modern sightless Israelis' use of "mobility aids" (such as white sticks) that can become stigmatized and consequently shunned, that Bartimaeus's tossing of his "beggar's cloak" (46) at Mark 10:50 suggests a similar rejection of stigma. However, the term used for Bartimaeus's cloak is an extremely common one, and he abandons it in a fashion similar to other Markan characters who leave all in response to Jesus (cf. 1:18, 20; 2:14; 10:21, 28), calling into question the aptness of the comparison.

In this book, Lawrence embraces the paucity of evidence for the lived experiences of people with disabilities in antiquity (the Gospels providing no exception) as an opportunity for imagination and suggests that "sensory anthropology, which charts the sensory lives of those so often under-represented by previous ableist, Euro-centric suppositions" provides the requisite comparanda. "We need evocative resources to

juxtapose with our texts," she writes, "if not to reach 'reality' then at least to generate new questions" (30). Lawrence accomplishes more than merely generating new questions, even if readers will at times take exception to some of this book's arguments. These reservations notwithstanding, scholars of religion have much to gain from Lawrence's provocative readings of familiar Gospel narratives, and this book will undoubtedly inspire further efforts toward the important task of reimagining the analysis of sensorial epistemologies at work in biblical texts.

ANDREW M. LANGFORD, *Eugene, Oregon*.

LAZIKANI, A. S. *Cultivating the Heart: Feeling and Emotion in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century Religious Texts*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015. 272 pp. \$155.00 (cloth).

This monograph by Ayoush S. Lazikani explores personal piety, particularly in female communities, in late medieval England, which at this time was undergoing a revolution in both theory and practice. The early Christian ideal of impassibility, or freedom from emotional disturbance, was now competing with a new focus on the affective-cognitive involvement of worshippers in the sufferings of the martyrs and the Passion, including being imaginatively present at, viewing, and recreating in their own bodies the torments of Christ and the maternal anguish of Mary.

Lazikani's book contributes to this area of study by offering a detailed consideration of the technologies of experiential affectivity built into a range of Middle English texts, including homilies (texts of exhortation), hagiography (saints' lives), anchoritic texts (guides for enclosed women religious), and Passion lyrics (poetic evocations of Christ's death on the cross). Lazikani provides a close reading of these texts, taking into consideration their exemplars in other languages (Latin, Anglo-Norman) and the texts collocated with them in manuscripts. She then deploys these readings to suggest how these texts could help readers comprehend the complex theological doctrines of Christianity (the Incarnation, the Passion) through their internalization and embodiment of the affective states represented in the texts. She further argues that groups of readers undergoing the same affective transformation in the communal consumption of these texts could result in the deeper formation of the religious community as an emotional community, in the terminology of Barbara Rosenwein.

Particularly interesting in Lazikani's analysis is the way it traces throughout the different genres under discussion the affective-cognitive complex of compassion, contemplating how this might have been conceptualized in the Middle Ages, and how it could have been employed within religious communities as a way of drawing nearer to divine truths. This analysis coalesces around the particularly medieval/early modern emotion of "ruth" (which is variously spelled in the Middle English texts under discussion as *reoupe*, *reowðe*, *reowfulness*) and the way this emotion constellates into others intimately implicated in medieval religious practice, including contrition, repentance, sorrow, and grief (these expressed bodily in tears), and mental and physical pain. Lazikani then shows how her texts technologically replicate this pain, including actual physical pain, in the worshipper's body. Lazikani's study is situated at a moment when the value of impassibility in theological thought had reached a watershed. She subtly elucidates the mixed messages that her texts send regarding this difficult moment, as they seem at times to advocate the traditional impassivity to pain that is based on the saint's security in faith, while at others they are unable to conceal, or even actively evoke, a surfeit of painful affective states in their readers.

In critique, it could be argued that Lazikani's book does not progress beyond this pursuit of close reading to address larger questions in religious or emotions



history. It simply proceeds from the analysis of one text to the next in series, without suggesting how these detailed textual analyses might be comprehended in toto to alter or reinvent existing views of medieval religion. The monograph does not offer a new methodology for the history of emotions, and it neither creates nor critiques theoretical approaches to emotions history or Middle English literature. For instance, in the opening of chapter 4, Lazikani adduces Mark Amsler's concept of "affective literacies," but although it would have been fascinating to see how this concept might relate to the texts under discussion, it makes no further appearance in the argument (94). Similarly, the conclusion offers no overarching summations, innovative findings, or new directions in research—simply a reiteration of the texts that have been discussed and a final textual analysis of two new ones.

What Lazikani does offer, however, is a closely parsed terminology of emotions relevant to personal piety, particularly of women, in medieval England. As a discipline, the history of emotions requires scholarly consideration of the fine shades of meaning in the emotions terms that medieval writers used. Lazikani's gift to the scholarly community, then, lies in her close analysis of the lexical scope of multiple emotions terms in Middle English religious texts, and her careful consideration of how and why those terms might have been chosen to translate their Latin and/or Anglo-Norman counterparts in religious texts. This is important close work upon which more ambitious methodological and theoretical projects in both the history of emotions and history of religion can then build.

There remain deficiencies in the final presentation of the book, some of which may be laid at the door of the author, others the press. Lazikani's Latin is not secure, and there are a number of mistakes in her presentation and translation of Latin text (see especially page 16, where "petere" is misunderstood as "pectore," and the meaning of "petere" [seek] then has to be supplied in brackets). Lazikani should clarify the written oeuvre of Arnold of Brescia on page 109. Nor is it acceptable in an academic monograph aimed at specialist readers to provide only a one-page "Select Bibliography." This means the reader is at times confronted with the surname of a scholar but no endnote or bibliographic reference to indicate who this might be or what they might have written. The index might similarly be considered skeletal rather than embodied. While passages in Latin and Anglo-Norman have been translated, Middle English texts have not, which limits the usefulness of this book for scholars in religious or emotions studies who are not Middle English specialists. I would also suggest that if the press is prepared to go to the expense of including color plates, the photographs should be professionally taken and edited. At present, these plates are so dark and indistinct they barely fulfill their intended function.

These concerns aside, the book will prove useful to scholars interested in the textual technologies of affectivity that were reconfiguring the practice and theorization of personal piety in England in the later Middle Ages, as well as scholars concerned with the terminology of medieval emotions.

JUANITA FEROS RUYS, *University of Sydney*.

MEYER, SABINE N. *We Are What We Drink: The Temperance Battle in Minnesota*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015. xiv+269 pp. \$55.00 (cloth).

Raised on a public memory that treats prohibition in the 1920s as a ridiculous failure and for whom drinking seems such a normal part of life, many Americans do not take the temperance crusade very seriously. Historians, of course, realize how important it was in the United States for over a century and have studied the move-

ment extensively. Even so, in her widely researched book on the fight over liquor in one state, Minnesota, Sabine N. Meyer manages to make a significant contribution to the scholarship on the temperance movement. Influenced by various recent theoretical approaches, she brings a fresh perspective to the topic, one marked by the sophistication of its interpretation and a deep appreciation for the conflicting and changing coalitions within the fight for temperance legislation. She thereby introduces new complexity into a seemingly familiar story, although at times the complexity renders the narrative a little hard to follow.

Meyer organizes the book around a chronological history of the fight over liquor laws in Minnesota, including the 1850s debate between “liturgical and freethinking German Americans” and “the large number of Anglo-American temperance advocates” (43) over a state prohibition law (and its enforcement) that closed saloons on Sunday. In the two decades after the Civil War, she shows, a split developed between “anti-liquor moderates” and “radicals” (54), which helped opponents who championed “personal liberty” (53) prevent new legislation. In the 1890s, a consensus formed in favor of a high license law, passed in 1887, which limited but did not end the availability of liquor. A critical turning point in the movement came in 1898, however, when Progressive reformers, influenced by American Protestantism, embraced the cause of prohibition, a factor other historians of the movement have stressed. Final victory for prohibition came with World War I. Again like earlier scholars, Meyer credits its success then to anti-German passions, a wartime need for conservation and efficiency, and a new willingness to use state power. She also includes a very interesting discussion of the role played within the state by the Minneapolis Commission on Public Safety.

As she recounts the long, complex history of the battle over antiliquor legislation, Meyer follows other students of the temperance movement in acknowledging the role of class and religion in motivating temperance reformers. Her account, though, may not give religion as much causative power as it had. She mentions the efforts of pietistic Protestants in the antebellum campaigns, the important agitation of Methodist ministers in the 1870s and 1880s, and the crucial role of the church-based Anti-saloon League in the early twentieth century. But she does not fully explore the religious motives or beliefs of these groups. Instead of religion and class, Meyer emphasizes the role of gender, ethnicity, and what she calls civic identity.

Meyer’s main interest, and major contribution, is not in tracing the legislative history of temperance legislation in Minnesota or exploring the motivations of temperance reformers, although her treatments of both are helpful. Rather, as her clever and evocative title, *We Are What We Drink*, suggests, she focuses on how the temperance campaigns shaped Minnesotans’ identities. She rightly points out that people have complex identities—intersectionality is the current academic term—but she primarily analyzes three types of identity. First, she looks at what she calls civic identity, carefully explaining how the city of St. Paul defined itself in opposition to the temperance movement. One suburb of St. Paul, Midway, and the city of Minneapolis, in contrast, supported the temperance movement. Combining the heritage of a New England town with Scandinavian influence, she explains, Minneapolis’s civic identity emphasized its sobriety. Although she might have explained the difference between the cities more thoroughly, Meyer’s account nevertheless undermines the idea of a simple rural-urban divide over prohibition. Second, she explores gender identity, primarily by looking closely at temperance and other reform efforts by the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union. Among the causes the WCTU embraced was suffrage, and “from the late 1880s on, an ever-increasing number of Minnesota’s temperance women on the ground . . . engaged in grassroots and equal-rights feminism and reconceptualized the temperance movement as an identity political formation” (4). These women pushed their way into male institutions and reached out to men in political

alliances. In the process, Meyer argues, a “paradigm shift in gender relations” resulted, one in which women moved from the private to the public sphere and that served as “a stepping stone toward emancipation” (197).

Third, and perhaps most important, Meyer provides an insightful analysis of how the temperance fights shaped two ethnic identities, those of Irish Catholics and German Americans. Irish Catholics embraced temperance as a way to redefine their ethnicity around sobriety rather than liquor. Although influenced by theology, that decision owed more to their desire for acceptance and uplift. In contrast, and despite some interethnic tensions between pietists and liturgicalists, German Americans opposed temperance laws, a stance that came to be a major part of their ethnic identity. Over time, Irish American temperance activities declined once the goals of acceptance and uplift had been achieved. German American opposition reached “its zenith” in the early twentieth century “only to similarly crumble a short time later” (157). War-time hostility for Germans and enthusiasm for prohibition overpowered German opposition, and by eliminating liquor from so many aspects of their communal life, prohibition then undermined “one of” the “most important supporting pillars” (192) of their identity.

With its complex and convincing treatment of the shifting alliances within the temperance movement and its fascinating insights into the role temperance agitation played in the formation of ethnic, gender, and civic identities, *We Are What We Drink* will find an important place in the historical literature on temperance and prohibition as well as the history of ethnicity in the United States.

GAINES M. FOSTER, *Louisiana State University*.

MISLIN, DAVID. *Saving Faith: Making Religious Pluralism an American Value at the Dawn of the Secular Age*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015. 224 pp. \$45.00 (cloth).

How does a culture change its mind about a topic as fraught as religion? Is the hard work of reconceptualization done by elites, whose ideas are disseminated in venues such as publications and new institutions, or does public opinion respond more organically to factors beyond anyone’s control? David Mislin, an intellectual historian at Temple University, takes the first approach in *Saving Faith*, arguing that the efforts of liberal Protestant leaders between 1870 and 1930 paved the way for a wider acceptance of religious pluralism in America in the later twentieth century. This tight focus makes for a brisk, readable narrative, full of recurring characters, but it causes the book’s argument for significance to wear thin in places. Influence is a tricky thing to prove.

Mislin is actually interested in two conceptual shifts, both of which have been noted by other scholars but in the reverse order from Mislin’s presentation. The two shifts are acceptance of religious diversity and embrace of religious doubt. Previous accounts posited that liberal Protestants, when faced with an event like the World’s Parliament of Religions or the ethnic mixing brought about by immigration and urbanization, reacted to the swirl of religious options by questioning their own convictions. How, they asked, could we be right and all of these other people be wrong? Diversity sowed doubt.

Mislin, by contrast, argues that liberal Protestants embraced doubt first, for reasons that welled up within their own tradition, and later found that the space created by doubt also accommodated religious pluralism. Reasons that propelled liberal Protestants toward this embrace of doubt included emphasis on progressive revelation and the placement of the personality of Jesus, rather than creedal statements



about him, at the center of Christian faith. These moves could be seen as defensive responses to skepticism in the later nineteenth century, born of cultural traumas and the ascendance of evolutionary theory, but Mislin does not view them as capitulations. "Yet this was not simply a case of liberal Protestants blindly modifying their theology to match cultural values," he writes. "The belief in progressive revelation served to buttress Christianity against the claims of unbelievers by creating a new defense of uncertainty" (32). Perhaps, Mislin's subjects mused, we are not right about everything—which means that other folks, be they conflicted Christians or agnostics or followers of other faiths, might not be wrong, either. Doubt accommodated diversity.

The turn-of-the-century liberal Protestants who executed this pivot, men (all of Mislin's key characters are men) such as Lyman Abbott, John Henry Barrows, George A. Coe, Washington Gladden, Leighton Parks, and Newman Smyth, were then equipped and motivated to make common causes across confessional lines. Mislin describes how members of this group pioneered interfaith dialogue, founded goodwill organizations, attempted to engineer the "organic unity" (120) of American churches, and laid the groundwork for the Protestant-Catholic-Jew ethos that strengthened after Mislin's time frame. Some of these efforts have been written about elsewhere, but Mislin's narrative manages to be both compact and comprehensive, making this book a solid prequel to Kevin M. Schultz's *Tri-Faith America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and a helpful addition to recent literature on liberal Protestantism.

Where Mislin struggles is in assessing the influence of his subjects and their bespoke institutions. He wisely acknowledges this challenge in the introduction, calling the book "a study of an elite cohort" and admitting a lack of "compelling evidence that the inclusive views espoused by liberal ministers widely filtered down to local churches" (10). This acknowledgment does not, however, prevent Mislin from frequently gesturing beyond his elite cohort. For example, he writes, "Protestant attitudes toward worship and liturgical practice grew more inclusive during the final decades of the nineteenth century" (87) without noting that this trend applied only to urban churches in a few denominations. The organic unity movement "never won widespread enthusiasm among either ordinary ministers or churchgoers in the United States," he admits, but he asserts two pages later that "even in its failure, the campaign for unity illustrates just how far Protestants' attitudes about religious diversity had shifted" (136, 138). Institutional failure does not seem like very good evidence of a broad attitudinal shift. The disjuncture between the claims Mislin wishes to make and the evidence for them is sharpest at the end of chapter 6, where he states that three Christian-Jewish alliances enjoyed "widespread support" and represented a "larger cause" (154), just a few lines before describing how one of the organizations could not raise funds from the Rockefeller family "because the group lacked widespread support" (155). The book does not reconcile this discrepancy.

Writing a history of religious pluralism in America puts Mislin in conversation with two significant books on the topic, William R. Hutchison's *Religious Pluralism in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003) and Robert Wuthnow's *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). Mislin's book is more similar to Hutchison's, as both are intellectual histories, but Hutchison ranged much farther across time (he swept from the Revolution to post-1960s America) and perspective, pointing out that liberal inclusionists consistently faced stiff opposition from particularists of various stripes. Hutchison also argued that the on-the-ground reality of diversity drove a slow, halting embrace of pluralism, with no major role assigned to religious doubt. Wuthnow, a sociologist studying the end of the twentieth century, found an even slower embrace of pluralism, which appeared in his work as a cultural process not led by anyone but engaged in all sorts of ways by all sorts of people. Some of the Americans Wuthnow profiled doubted and then became

more open to diversity, some were confronted by diversity and then lost confidence in their beliefs, some prided themselves on their inclusiveness but hardly ever encountered people of different faiths, and some maintained both exclusivist religious beliefs and warm relationships with members of other traditions.

There is an arc of history embedded in this process, but it is much longer and more complicated than Protestant liberals a century ago could have imagined. Insofar as religious pluralism is, to quote Mislin's subtitle, an American value today—an assessment cast into some doubt during the 2016 election cycle—it is difficult to attribute very much of that change to any group at any historical moment.

ELESHA COFFMAN, *Baylor University*.

MOORE, JOSEPH S. *Founding Sins: How a Group of Antislavery Radicals Fought to Put Christ into the Constitution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 232 pp. \$29.95 (cloth).

The United States was not founded as a Christian nation, and the most conservative and traditional Christians of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries said so! This is the central argument of Joseph S. Moore's latest book, *Founding Sins: How a Group of Antislavery Radicals Fought to Put Christ into the Constitution*. An engaging, well-researched, and ambitious book, *Founding Sins* uses the Covenanters, the most old-school of all Presbyterians, as a case study in order to debunk the Christian America thesis. Their very existence, the book claims, "shatter[s]" claims that the Founders desired a religious and even Christian influence upon the state (157). The Covenanters denounced the newly founded United States of America as a godless nation whose constitution was "a manifest dethroning of the Lord and his Anointed form the government" (65).

Moore opens and concludes his book with a brief critical engagement with the Christian America claims of David Barton, Glenn Beck, and Francis Schaeffer. The main body of the book, however, is set in the past. *Founding Sins* focuses on the Covenanter variety of Presbyterianism and its influence on American politics. As such, it provides a helpful survey of the Covenanter movement, starting in Scotland, then making its way to the United States. Along the way, the reader is treated to Presbyterian church history, political intrigue of the English monarchy, American colonial history, and a fascinating look at the often contradictory nature of nineteenth-century moral and social activism.

The Covenanters had a unique theology that bore a superficial likeness to emerging Republican political theories. Its key terms carried quite different meanings though, as their state of nature was inescapably religious and their federalism necessarily theocratic. As Moore explains, the Covenanters functionally subordinated the civil realm to the church, particularly the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Because of this basic theological commitment, religious tolerance was impossible for the Covenanters. Indeed, an established church was necessary for political legitimacy.

*Founding Sins* sketches out the Covenanters' surprising, albeit brief political success in Britain, and then moves to its main interest, the telling of their influence on early American politics. This is easily the strongest part of the book, as Moore illustrates how these fringe Presbyterians managed to lead early insurrections against the British, capture the imagination of Benjamin Franklin, and pick two different fights with George Washington. The Covenanters initially rejected the legitimacy of the United States altogether, faulting its US Constitution for not establishing a federal church and for continuing to allow for African slavery. Indeed, they were the first abolitionists, predating even the Quakers. And unlike the Quakers, the Covenanters never felt any reluctance to bear arms in the service of abolition. Interest-

ingly, it was this abolitionist contribution that afforded the Covenanters their best attempt to create a "Christian America," gaining them a sympathetic hearing from Abraham Lincoln and later enabling them to form the National Reform Association, best known for proposing an explicitly Christian amendment to the Constitution. This too would end in frustration, thus proving again that America was not, from their perspective, a Christian nation.

*Founding Sins* is impressive in its concise presentation of the Covenanters' history and their interaction with American politics. It succeeds in its goal of telling the story of "the most important religious sect in American history that no one remembers today" (36). Moore also convincingly demonstrates how the legacy of Samuel Rutherford, as embodied by the Covenanters, is opposed to that of John Locke and Thomas Jefferson, thus falsifying at least one key claim made about the Christian character of the American founding (155).

The book does have some noticeable weaknesses, however. There are a few typographical errors. *Presbyteros* and Socinian are both misspelled (10, 75). While incidental to the book's content, these are well-known terms in the field of church history. Subsequent printings will certainly want to correct them.

The greater challenge with *Founding Sins* is its ambition. It does not present itself simply as a history book. It argues that the historical presence of the Covenanters proves that the United States was not founded as a Christian nation. Moore is confident in his assertions: "The United States *clearly* was not founded as a Christian nation" (7, my emphasis). He opens and closes the book with this argument, even stating that "the United States is a more Christian nation today than it was when the founders wrote the Constitution" (1). But for this claim to be proven, Moore must do more than demonstrate that the Covenanters existed. He must demonstrate that their distinctive views of the relationship between church and state in early American politics are correct. This is an argument that exceeds the bounds of *Founding Sins*.

While Moore does briefly note the Covenanters' detractors, he does not give their counterarguments any serious examination. The Covenanters were always fringe, and more mainstream Christian thinkers constantly attempted to rebut their arguments. Moore acknowledges a few of these detractors, importantly the ex-Covenanter and Pennsylvanian statesman William Findley, but Moore does not explain that Findley marshaled a theological as well as philosophical defense of American religious liberty, even claiming key positions of the Protestant Reformation as necessary planks upon which the American settlement could be built.

Moore himself acknowledges something of this last point, though it is hidden in a closing end note. Importantly, he writes, "Protestantism has defined what religion is under American law" (208). Thus our "non-Christian" nation has nevertheless depended upon the categories of a specific sort of Christianity for its most basic legal principles. Moore's book then cannot end the conversation of Christian America, as he claims. What it can do is sharpen the definitions and categories of that discussion, as it raises important objections and casts old questions in a new light. Viewed from that perspective, *Founding Sins* is a helpful and important addition to a conversation that continues apace.

STEVEN WEDGEWORTH, *Christ Church Lakeland, Florida*.

MORELLO, GUSTAVO, SJ. *The Catholic Church and Argentina's Dirty War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 240 pp. \$74.00 (cloth).

*The Catholic Church and Argentina's Dirty War* by Gustavo Morello, SJ, makes an important contribution to the literature that has been trying to understand the behavior



of religious actors and institutions during times of state violence. The book is focused on the La Salette case that took place in Córdoba, Argentina, in 1976. The newly established military government kidnapped, jailed, and tortured Father James Week and five seminarians for two months before they were exiled to the United States. Morello takes this case as an example to explore the role of Catholicism during this time of conflict. On the one hand, Argentina is a Catholic country and President General Jorge Videla claimed that the military was protecting Argentina's Christian values. On the other hand, inspired by the changes within the Catholic Church that followed the Second Vatican Council, many priests were starting to understand their role within society differently, striving to reconnect with the poor and fight against social injustice, which put them at odds with the ideology of the military state.

Positioning himself as a Jesuit sociologist who has not experienced the repression of Argentina's military government firsthand, Morello introduces the political and social context of the dictatorship, the disputes within the Latin American Catholic Church after Vatican II, and, following José Casanova, the increased institutional differentiation brought about by modernity. Trying to understand how theology can impact the behavior of religious actors in times of social crisis and how the sociopolitical context influences theological interpretations, the author distinguishes three Catholicisms based on their responses to state terror: "antiseccular" Catholicism (the position of the military government and some sectors of the Catholic Church), "institutional" Catholicism, and "committed" Catholicism (exemplified by the victims) (12). Following Rubén Dri, Morello also distinguishes between liberation theology (the victims) and domination theology (the military) (5). Argentina's church did not officially denounce the actions of the military government. To explain this silence, Morello turns to Anthony Gill's rational choice theory. However, he responds to a perceived gap in the literature about religion and dictatorships with its too narrow focus on institutional response. By contrast, he foregrounds the "embedded Church" (14), using interviews, archival work, and participant observation to explore how individual religious actors understood their role in this violent context.

Chapters 2 and 3 use testimonies to provide an account of the kidnapping. Morello allows his interviewees to speak by quoting them directly and extensively. These chapters are especially strong in their characterization of the victims, explaining how their background and education within the Catholic Church resulted in their "committed" stance. The author succeeds at elucidating how their theology, rather than any political opinion, informed their work with the people of the shantytown of Yofre that led to their arrest. In chapter 4 he addresses the responses of different actors within the Catholic hierarchy to the kidnapping and the arguments of antiseccular Catholics that characterized the victims' work as subversive. However, an important unaddressed question remains: in this context, how are political and theologically informed actions distinguished? It is interesting that in a country where the constitution declares the federal government as Catholic, actors of that faith were not protected from repression even when they cited it as the inspiration for their actions. More discussion on the kind of rhetoric used to make certain religiously motivated actions "political" would have been helpful.

Through the testimonies, chapter 5 recounts the captivity and torture suffered by the victims. Especially instructive about this chapter is the analysis of how different members of the military government, as well as the military vicariate, engaged in a "theology of domination" (104). Despite the fact that, in chapter 6, Morello regretfully admits to the difficulty of giving a voice to the torturers because of their refusal to provide a testimony, one of the strongest aspects of Morello's work is his ability to explain the logic behind the antiseccular position, not from a rational choice approach, but from a theological standpoint.

Chapters 7 and 8 deal with institutional Catholicism. When this label is used to refer to the Episcopal Conference the argument is clear. Even though most bishops helped individual people who suffered state repression and seemed to privately disagree with the actions of the military and the antisecularists, they did not make any public statement condemning the actions of the state. Because they saw the church as separate from the state and civil society, and wanted to align neither with the military nor with the revolutionaries, they refrained from any public opinion. Yet, the Episcopal Conference is not the only organ of the church hierarchy that Morello deals with. He also discusses the reaction of the Vatican as well as international organizations. The category of institutional Catholicism and its theology in the face of state repression, therefore, lumps together very different reactions toward state repression and remains somewhat vague.

In chapter 9, Morello provides concluding thoughts on the relationship between the changing public sphere and the different responses that Catholic actors took toward state terrorism. In this section, the author explains that both institutional and committed Catholics saw the Catholic Church as a mediator between civil society and the political sphere. However, this manifested in different ways because, in the face of a more differentiated public sphere, committed Catholics appealed to the masses in order to maintain their public role, while institutional Catholics turned to the maintenance of traditional political alliances. Following Casanova, he argues that antisecular Catholics saw themselves as a “Church,” “in the sense of religion with a monopoly over a territory, coexistent with the political community” (182). Even though Morello’s focus is on Argentina, the analysis of the role of Catholicism in the public sphere might have benefited from some comparative analysis with, for example, the Chilean Catholic Church, which is also established and yet took a very different approach to the human rights violations committed during the same period in Chile, or the Uruguayan church, which took a similar position as that of the institutional Catholics in Argentina even though there is a strict separation of church and state. In conclusion, even though this work leaves some theoretical questions open in relation to the role of religion within the changing public sphere, it successfully explores how and why different Catholic theologies emerged during the social and political upheavals of 1970s Argentina.

LUCÍA CASH BEARE, *University of California, Irvine*.

SPADOLA, EMILIO. *The Calls of Islam: Sufis, Islamists, and Mass Mediation in Urban Morocco*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2013. 190 pp. \$80.00 (cloth).

Emilio Spadola’s book, *The Calls of Islam: Sufis, Islamists, and Mass Mediation in Morocco*, begins with a description of an exorcism conducted and recorded on video by young Islamist men—to use the language of the book—in the old city of Fez, Morocco. The spirit that is exorcised is Aisha, “a legendary jinn in Moroccan popular Sufism” (1), who identifies herself as a 350-year-old Jew. The video is now widely available on YouTube.

The work of anthropology is both estrangement and intimacy, estranging what seems familiar and natural to us, and discursively (de)constructing the strange and other as paradoxically intimate and familiar. Spadola’s book is a fine example of the latter. It illumines the worlds of jinn exorcism in contemporary Morocco with cogent explanatory power. The idea of Islamists performing jinn exorcisms may seem incomprehensible, but it makes a lot more sense if we approach the exorcisms, as Spadola does, through thinking about media and mediation. The Islamist exorcists see their

work as part of *da'wah*, calling Muslims to true Islam. In chapter 7 especially we see that this particular call is based on a thoroughly technologized ontology of religion as mass media—a “commoditized and mass-mediated dissemination of God’s call” (127). As one of the book’s opening epigraphs states, “Religion is communication.” The quote is attributed to the television producers for Amr Khalid, an Egyptian preacher whose sermons circulate widely in the Arabic-speaking world, including Morocco, through satellite TV.

This model of religion as mass communication emphasizes transparency and uniformity, and sees other doctrinal and ritual approaches to Islam not merely as competing calls but as obstacles to transparent communication, and hence to the free choice of the pious consumer to “tune in.” Jinns are not doctrinally problematic for Islamists, yet their approach to the jinn is radically different from traditional Moroccan approaches—and, it should be added, traditional approaches across the Islamic world—in being unequivocally hostile toward the jinn. Spadola grounds this hostility in the ways in which traditional cures of the jinn challenge both the transparent model of communication and the ideal of pious Islamic personhood espoused by the Islamists. The problem with traditional cures—which depend on unvoiced, secret talismanic letters and whispered communication with the jinn—is that they lack clear communicability (124). And, “Whereas curers, *fugaha*’, seers, and Sufi trance specialists view a jinn’s call and disruption of individual bodies and minds as a fact of life, to be domesticated and soothed by the powers of writing or by propitiatory gifts, Islamic exorcists view jinn possession as a personal failing—the result of a lack of self-control” (128). In a remarkably perspicacious parallel, Spadola compares Islamist views of jinn and jinn possession to discussions in the United States around drug use and possession, where students were exhorted to “Just say No!” Both cases, Spadola points out, assume a solitary individual as the locus of social control (125).

One of the largely unremarked ironies of the ongoing “War on Terror” is that Islamists, usually seen as the enemy, espouse a disenchanted ontology and a sense of individual moral responsibility remarkably similar to those valorized in the West, broadly speaking, and Sufis—who traditionally have a radically different ontology and hence different grounds for ethics—are seen as the West’s liberal allies. This is certainly the case in Morocco, a valued ally of the United States, where the need to maintain the authoritarian monarchical state’s “spiritual security” has led not just to a crackdown on Islamists but also to a revival of underclass Sufi trance rites, epitomized by Gnawa music, as the markers of Morocco’s national culture. In chapter 6, Spadola asks, “How might we account for the strange itinerary of once jinn soaked trance rites—from the object of nationalist and reformist criticism to very mark of middle class youth belonging? By what discursive and material shifts could trance shift from the nadir to the apotheosis of Moroccan modernity” (101)? (These are relevant questions for other parts of the Muslim world as well. In Pakistan too, for example, the promotion of Sufi folk music as “the sound of the nation” on programs such as Coke Studio is a post-9/11 phenomenon.) The remarkable strength of Spadola’s book lies in asking and skillfully answering these questions, both historically and ethnographically. Spadola takes us through the emergence of Moroccan nationalism in the 1920s and ’30s, which focused on efforts to eradicate underclass Sufi trance while developing a novel nationalism grounded in the mass veneration of the Sufi monarch (chap. 2). He follows the ways in which the *baraka* of the king was both constituted by and broadcast through state-controlled mass media in the 1975 Green March (chap. 3). He follows the *fqih*, who use “silent” talismanic writing to summon and control jinns (chap. 4). And when their cures fail for a woman called Zuhur, possessed by Aisha, he follows the rituals of entrancement, including Gnawa



music, that make Zuhur a medium for the *mluk*, the “possessors” or named jinn who have a long history in Morocco (chap. 5).

Spadola’s book is theoretically sophisticated, skillfully constructed, and rich in detail. The ethnographic present of the book is, however, filled with sadness, disappointment, and failure. The Islamist jinn exorcists go underground, or are imprisoned, after crackdowns by the state. The *fqih* Ahmad’s attempts to cure Zuhur and to control her jinn are ineffectual. His inability to cure Zuhur leads to her becoming a medium of the *mluk* through a Gnawa trance ritual. But, as Spadola notes, her ailments continued, and Zuhur did not seem too happy even after becoming a seer. The wild trancing that dominated the colonial ethnographic records of saints’ *moussems* (festivals) is now replaced by “self-absorbed” teenagers shooting selfies (117)—“the sacred had been breached” (118). The social media protests that unfolded in Morocco at the height of the Arab Spring brought “disappointingly small crowds” (139). The book poses us a challenge: how do we think with affect, with loss and disappointment, as *constitutive* of forms of postcolonial modernity?

In the book Spadola posits a commensurability between traditional jinn rituals and contemporary media: both are forms of mediation, of communication, of control. While jinn rituals enact the hierarchies and forms of social control of the monarchical state, videos of jinn exorcism challenge these hierarchies by enacting the globalized and uniformly flattened image of the ideal Islamist *ummah*. But in my experience of working with those who claim intimacy with the jinn—in an admittedly far different cultural and political context—the jinn open up senses of wonder and difference beyond ordinary language, and they open up potentialities of inhabiting alternate temporalities, of affective transformation, and of ethical self-fashioning far in excess of any discursive dialectic of control. I would have liked to see the book engage more with the mystery and inscrutability that the jinn bring into the everyday. But in its perspicacious paralleling of the discourses of jinn exorcism and mass media, Spadola gives us a remarkable analytic lens into the global (and globalized) ontology of contemporary religion, across confessional divides. This book is a valuable read for scholars of anthropology, Islam, media studies, and religion.

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RUSH, JAMES R. *Hamka’s Great Story: A Master Writer’s Vision of Islam for Modern Indonesia*.

New Perspectives in Southeast Asian Studies. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016. 312 pp. \$79.95 (cloth).

James Rush’s new book tells the story of Hamka (Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, 1908–81), one of the most widely read authors in modern Indonesia and one of the country’s most prominent public religious figures. Rush approaches Hamka’s rich and varied life experience and his massive body of published work as all part of one “Great Story.” Rush takes the title for this book from Robert Berkhofer (*Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995], 38–39), clarifying for his readers here that he is deploying it in the sense of a “master interpretive code”—a metanarrative that serves to order the past, interpret the present, and predict the future” (xiv).

Approaching Hamka’s life and his sprawling written corpus in this way, Rush masterfully presents a rich and compelling portrait of a new kind of Islamic religious authority, one that emerges out of colonial contexts of rapid modernization and developments alongside the creation of a new nation over the course of the twentieth century.

To tell this great story in an effective way, the book is structured into chapters that are each focused on a selection of Hamka's published work. The first, "Society's Compass," focuses on his early years as a writer in Medan during the 1930s. This colonial boomtown supported a pioneering Indonesian publishing scene in which Hamka explored new voices as both a writer of fiction and editor of the magazine *Pedoman Masyarakat*. Across diverse genres, Hamka grappled with issues of how to achieve happiness and navigate the moral hazards of life in this rapidly developing economy through an embrace of particular forms of Islamic belief and practice, as he extensively elaborated in a series of regular columns that were later compiled into his book *Modern Sufism (Tasawuf Modern)*. During this same period of his life, Hamka also wrote some of his most widely read novels—most of which likewise originally appeared as serialized installments in *Pedoman Masyarakat*.

Across both his fiction and his essays, Hamka channeled a literary cosmopolitanism mediated by Arabic, facilitated by the religious instruction that he was exposed to in the circles around his father, Haji Rasul—a prominent reformist preacher. The chapter entitled "Father and Son" pulls back to Hamka's roots in the Minangkabau region of West Sumatra and his relationship with his father, as vividly portrayed in Hamka's book *Ajahku*. Here Rush opens a window onto both the currents of modern Islamic reform through the Netherlands Indies from Egypt and elsewhere during the early decades of the twentieth century as well as critiques of local customary practices (*adat*) and their "baleful influence on family structure" (89–90)—both of which came to be abiding themes in Hamka's work.

Chapter 3 treats Hamka's midlife memoir, *Kenang-Kenangan Hidup*, and its striking portrayal of his sharp rise and humiliating fall during the Japanese occupation of Sumatra. With the end of the war and the establishment of Indonesian independence, however, Hamka reemerged to produce new iterations of his vision of Islam for the nation, "integrating rationalist, sufi, and mainstream Sunni approaches" to Islam (114). There were, however, other aspirations for the new nation at work as well—as a result of which Hamka was inevitably positioned on the front lines of the so-called culture wars that gripped the country over its first decades of independence. Rush's discussion of this period portrays Hamka in his role as imam at the newly created al-Azhar mosque in Jakarta, which emerged as a prominent center for Islamic propagation (*da'wa*). Hamka's writings published during this period were to a significant extent devoted to defending Islam against the perceived seductions of the modern West and the growing threat of Communism.

With the decisive defeat of the Communists in the horrific violence of 1965 and the establishment of Suharto's New Order regime, Hamka gained a new kind of public prominence with his appointment as head of the National Council of Ulama. Hamka held this position during a period of rising interreligious conflict and was a prominent voice calling for an increasingly strong connection between Islamic religious identity and the Indonesian nation, as evidenced in some of his more controversial positions from that period. Rush, however, is somewhat at pains to distance Hamka from this part of his legacy, asserting that "some may find it tempting to discern the seeds of Indonesia's latter-day Islamism in Hamka and his Great Story. . . . But it would be a mistake to read back into his Great Story the origins of the radical Islamism of today's Indonesia" (196). Instead, he points to passages from Hamka's massive work of Quranic exegesis as evidence of more moderate dimensions of Hamka's "great story" (176).

This book as whole does a remarkable job of bringing together works from Hamka's vast body of publications to tell this story. For all this deep engagement with Hamka's own writings, however, the book touches only very lightly on the vast body of scholarship available on the political, cultural, and religious contexts of twentieth-century Indonesia in which Hamka lived and worked. Likewise there is precious little

here to help situate Hamka and his engagement with elements from various streams of Islamic religious thought. Readers are thus left on their own to place his life and work in relation to broader developments in modern Islam. The only other Muslim thinker that Rush substantially discusses in relation to Hamka is the Egyptian Islamist author Sayyid Qutb. There are of course some similarities between the two—both, for example, were public figures who rose to prominence through literary circles in early phases of their careers, and both composed major works of Quranic exegesis while serving time as political prisoners. Rush also rightly highlights some of the crucial differences between the careers and the published writings of the two men, particularly in their attitudes toward the modern state and the legitimacy of violence in the cause of religion. Nevertheless the focus on Qutb as the sole point of comparison and contrast at the very end of the book seems something of an odd choice when a number of other religious and literary figures from modern Egypt and elsewhere loom considerably larger as influences on Hamka's own work. This, however, marks only a slight distraction from an otherwise excellent book. *Hamka's Great Story* clearly represents the work of many years of sustained engagement with its subject, a careful reading of primary sources, and serious critical reflection on how that material can both inform a portrait of a unique individual and shed light on the formation of new models of Muslim religious authority in the modern world.

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WAINWRIGHT, WILLIAM J. *Reason, Revelation, and Devotion*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. 211 pp. \$27.99 (paper).

In order to philosophize properly about religion, are the dry, detached tools of analytic philosophy all that is needed? In recent decades, a small but growing minority of philosophers have started to argue that, immensely valuable though those tools are, they are not enough. William Wainwright, through many distinguished publications including *Reason and the Heart: A Prolegomenon to a Critique of Passional Reason* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), has long been in the forefront of philosophers of religion who have been interested in the passionate aspects of religious reasoning, and in this latest book he systematically examines the extent to which religious arguments can fail to be probative even when they make valid inferences from true premises.

However much philosophers may implicitly assume the contrary, arguments do not operate in a timeless, noumenal realm abstracted from the “existential specificity” (32) of the context in which they are constructed and subsequently heard. And this specificity, of course, includes the preexisting feelings and attitudes of those who participate in the discussion. Some, like William James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature* (London: Longman, Green, 1902), have concluded that philosophical arguments “prove nothing rigorously” (as James puts it) but merely “corroborate our existing partialities” (*Varieties*, lecture 18). But this is very much not Wainwright's position. Philosophical proofs, he argues, “can be, and often are, an integral part of some styles of piety and ways of living a religiously engaged life” (38).

In a similar vein, Wainwright, rightly in my view, takes issue with the recent tendency in some philosophical circles to downplay the importance of evidence in the formation and retention of religious belief. Reiterating the position he took in *Reason and the Heart*, he argues that “mature religious belief can, and perhaps should, be based on evidence, but . . . the evidence can be accurately assessed only by men and women who possess the proper moral and spiritual qualifications” (60).



But how do we get such qualifications? In one of the book's most interesting chapters, Wainwright explores the role played by the "ingestion" of sacred texts (49). In many traditions—especially before the invention of printing—repeated reciting, chanting, memorizing, and reflecting on the scriptures had the effect of making the text enter "into the fabric of [one's] intellectual and emotional life in a way that makes deep claims upon that life" (50, quoting Paul Griffiths, *Religious Reading*). The result of such spiritual formation can clearly transform someone's understanding of the import of an argument or the meaning and status of a given body of evidence.

Yet this in turn raises complex issues, which Wainwright determinedly broaches but to my mind never quite resolves, about the comparative agenda that has increasingly influenced how theology and philosophy of religion are practiced and taught in the Western world. Academics anxious to avoid the charge of doctrinal exclusivism now routinely include in their lectures examples drawn from Hinduism, Buddhism, and other world religions, rather than focusing entirely on the Judaeo-Christian tradition that, in most cases, profoundly shaped their own intellectual and emotional outlook. But given the practical impossibility of reflecting on all the traditions in sufficient depth, the effect of this can be to reduce the subject to an exercise in the acquisition of knowledge rather than understanding, mugging up labels and credal doctrines for the end-of-term exam rather than gaining genuine insight into the meaning of what is going on.

In Wainwright's subsequent discussions on the role of rhetoric (and of revelation) in religious argumentation (and on the relation between reason and mystical theology), these issues tend to recur, in one form or another, if only because each chapter conscientiously includes examples from Eastern religions, despite the fact that given one of the book's main theses they can have a very limited impact without a deeper immersion in the traditions in question. In his final chapter Wainwright summarizes his conclusions by declaring, first, that "poetry, myth, symbol, and story can express truths and insights that can't be adequately expressed in other ways" but adding, second, that if they are not to fall prey to what Coleridge called "fancy" they must be "tethered to reasoned argument and careful analysis" (148). This strikes me as a highly attractive two-part conclusion, and if the first half is taken on board as well as the second, it should lead to a sorely needed shift in the philosophy of religion, so that it becomes more ready to acknowledge how deeply one's assessment of the various arguments is affected by one's emotions and, more generally, how the claims that philosophers purport to scrutinize cannot properly be grasped without immersion in the way of life that shaped them.

This is an admirable book, impeccably executed (as one would expect of a writer of this caliber, formidably knowledgeable and erudite) and wonderfully comprehensive, within a comparatively compact space. If despite all these virtues I felt certain qualms by the end, these arose from the sense of a curious disconnect between the position that is so ably defended by Wainwright and the way in which it is defended. For while we are told, for example, that the emotions are crucial in the assessment of argument, or that carefully deployed rhetoric is "essential to sound reasoning in . . . theology and on many metaphysical topics" (149), the author's own reasoning in this volume rarely if ever deploys rhetoric, nor does he delve into the deeper emotional context behind the various theses and countertheses that he so judiciously expounds and evaluates. So while what is said in the book is that emotion and rhetoric are important in philosophical and theological argument, what often seems to be implicitly conveyed to the reader, by the predominant style and tone of the book, is that detached argumentation alone can be expected to be sufficient. That aside, all those interested in philosophy of religion and philosophical theology should be indebted

to Wainwright's splendid volume for making them think harder about the nature and role of intellectual argument in matters of religion.

JOHN COTTINGHAM, *University of Reading and Heythrop College, University of London.*

VACEK, HEATHER H. *Madness: American Protestant Responses to Mental Illness*. Studies in Religion, Theology, and Disability. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2015. 283 pp. \$39.95 (cloth).

A good friend once told me, "everyone should have a therapist." The comment was at once serious and flippant—it referred to the universal human susceptibility to mental distress, but the words also implied, with a cynical bite, that most modern Americans would find such a proposition appalling. The stigma of mental illness is powerful in the United States, a problem that Heather Vacek tackles head on in this important monograph.

Vacek argues that American Protestants' responses to mental illness over the centuries are characterized by "benign neglect." Clergy have relinquished clerical authority over healing to "secular medical professionals," and Protestant communities, more generally, have adapted to cultural norms that both accept and promote the stigma associated with mental illness. Sometimes this stigma is rooted in theological conceptions of sin, sometimes in the post-Enlightenment world's conception of human possibility and—correspondingly—failure. The bulk of Vacek's book, however, is dedicated to "five paradigmatic Protestants" (Cotton Mather, Benjamin Rush, Dorothea Dix, Anton Boisen, and Karl Menninger), whose lives span almost the entirety of Anglo-American history, and whom Vacek offers as exceptions to this story. Each, she argues, actively promoted mental health and healing out of a profound sense of divine calling and Christian duty (3–4). Reflecting on these exceptions, Vacek concludes her book with a constructive discussion of what contemporary Protestant congregations can do to change fundamentally their response to mental illness.

Vacek relies on her five Protestants in microhistorical fashion. Each has a personal story of faith, a connection to mental illness, and a commitment to help others. Their individual stories also represent opportunities to tell broader stories about American Protestantism, developments in mental health and medicine, and social and cultural changes. Each story, importantly, follows an arc: from great effort, hope, and potential to continued suffering and stigma. Beginning with the oft-maligned Puritan Cotton Mather, Vacek highlights with nuance his medical interest and providential faith. Shaped by his belief in original sin and by personal experience, Mather understood illness—including mental illness—as a part of the human condition. This view shaped the era's response to sickness, typified by as-needed, familial- or local community-based care. Yet there was also deep anxiety about supernatural, and potentially demonic, causes of mental illness.

Benjamin Rush marked a different path. He lived in an era of increasing medical professionalization and was drawn to Universalist teachings. New scientific understandings of disease and its origins displaced religious ideas that connected sickness to sin, and Universalism likewise posited a faith in human nature and progress. With these changes, however, came new problems, which Vacek does not hesitate to point out: while Enlightenment ideas "heralded human reason," they also "equated a loss of reason with a loss of humanity" (47).

By the mid-nineteenth century, Vacek argues, religious efforts on behalf of the mentally ill focused not on diagnosis or treatment but rather on proper medical facilities. Dorothea Dix was an important advocate for mental health institutions.

Influenced both by her exposure to a Unitarianism that upheld human reason and her father's pious Methodism, Dix worked with civic leaders and physicians while pursuing her work as a divine mission. Unfortunately, the institutions built in this era of optimism ultimately failed to help the mentally ill. With inadequate staffing and resources, they suffered from and contributed to the stigma associated with mental illness. Anton Boisen, a Presbyterian minister who personally experienced institutional care, criticized Christians for abdicating the care of the suffering mentally ill to medical professionals. He was fundamental in the creation of clinical pastoral education, seeking to create firsthand training for seminarians to learn not only about human nature and suffering but also about the dangers of stigma.

The twentieth century brought change, particularly visible in the career of Karl Menninger, whose work in mental health was motivated by new developments within psychiatry and by his sense of Christian calling. The world wars brought attention to preventative care, seen in the so-called mental hygiene movement, and Menninger was open to such ideas; his main focus, however, was on biological and psychological techniques. Anxious to support the chronically ill, Menninger was cautious about how emphasizing preventative care could actually deepen stigma.

Stigma is the recurring problem and question of each chapter. Its insidiousness is rooted, Vacek shows, in the ability of Americans and Christians alike to assign the origins of mental illness to supernatural, biological, and moral causes—from sinfulness or demonic possession to laziness, masturbation, or heredity. Each chapter, nonetheless, details examples of action and compassion rooted in Christian faith. From these examples, Vacek develops a concluding statement to Christians today on the need for sincere, committed, congregational-level change. She offers a theology of “Welcome,” one in which Christians remember that “they are called to be a stigmatized people; to resist social norms contrary to Christian belief and practice” (168).

As with any good book, I am left with questions. The ceding of clerical authority to medicine is a crucial part of Vacek's overarching narrative, but many of her figures seemed, in fact, to balance different sources of authority as they responded to mental illness. Menninger's authority, for example, was rooted not only in his medical training but also in his public, Protestant faith. Likewise, Vacek on occasion refers to medicine as a secular profession, and I wonder about this distinction. She does much, after all, to uncover an implicit (or not so implicit) religiously informed morality in medical professionals' responses to mental health. Finally, in her section on Dix, Vacek alludes to the work of theorists such as Michel Foucault, who argued that nineteenth-century reform efforts and institution building were actually in the service of social homogeneity. Vacek is cognizant of the power of cultural norms, yet her careful rendering of Dix's biography challenges a reductive account of reform. How does Vacek combine her acute awareness of the power of social institutions and stigma in shaping complacency (past and present) with her historical, contextual, and Christian sensitivity to her subjects? How should we connect the nuanced portraits of past Americans working on mental health issues with the very general sketch of American Christians today? This is perhaps an inevitable conundrum of a book that bridges historical and constructive arguments, but I think it is worth considering.

We live in an era of ever more interest in religion and medicine, yet religious studies has produced remarkably few monographs on the relationship between religion and mental health. The historical breadth of Vacek's book offers a wide-angle lens on this relationship, tracing major shifts as well as detailing turns both disturbing and promising. Aware both of the importance of history and the variety of communities such studies might reach, Vacek offers a thoughtful starting point for future scholarship and engagement.

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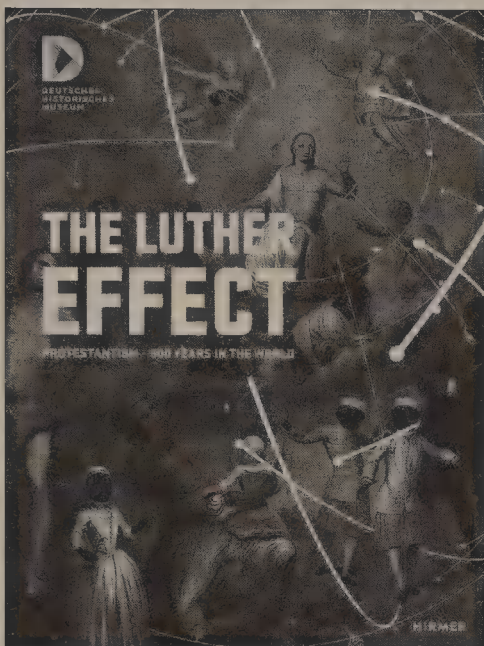
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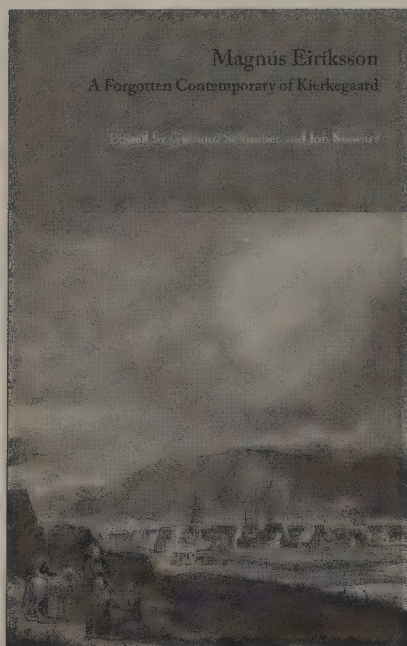
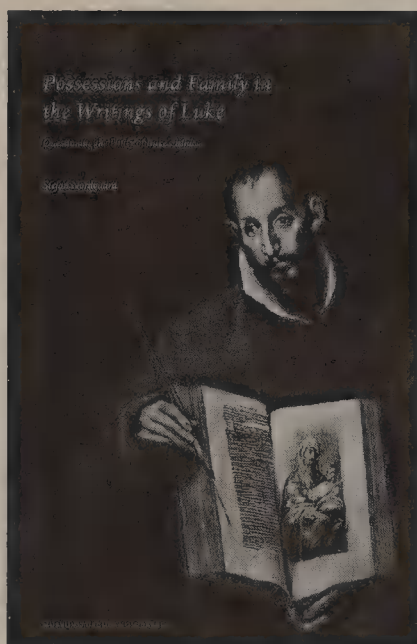


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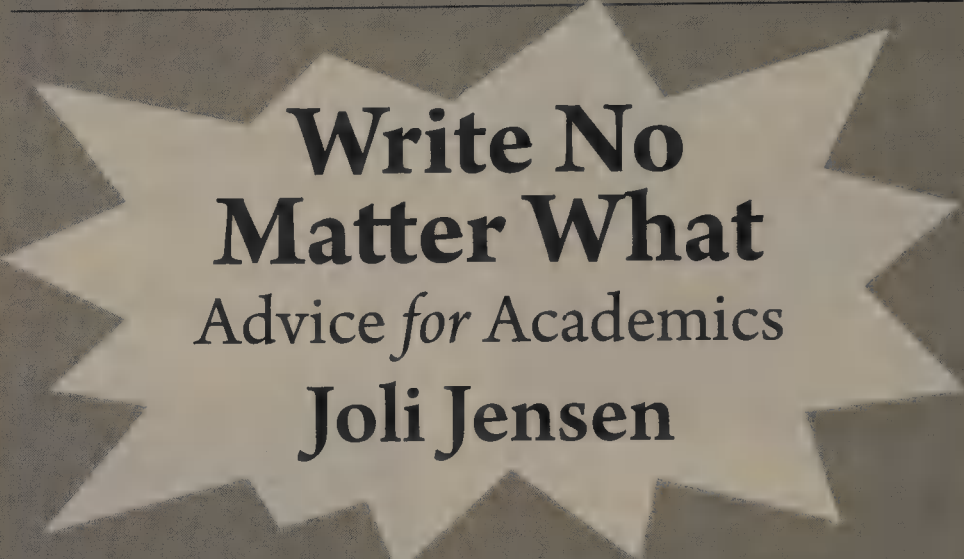
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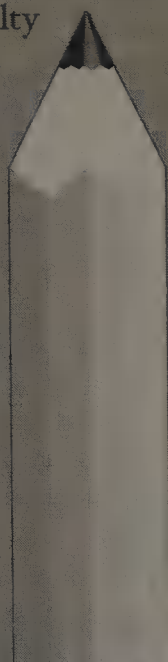
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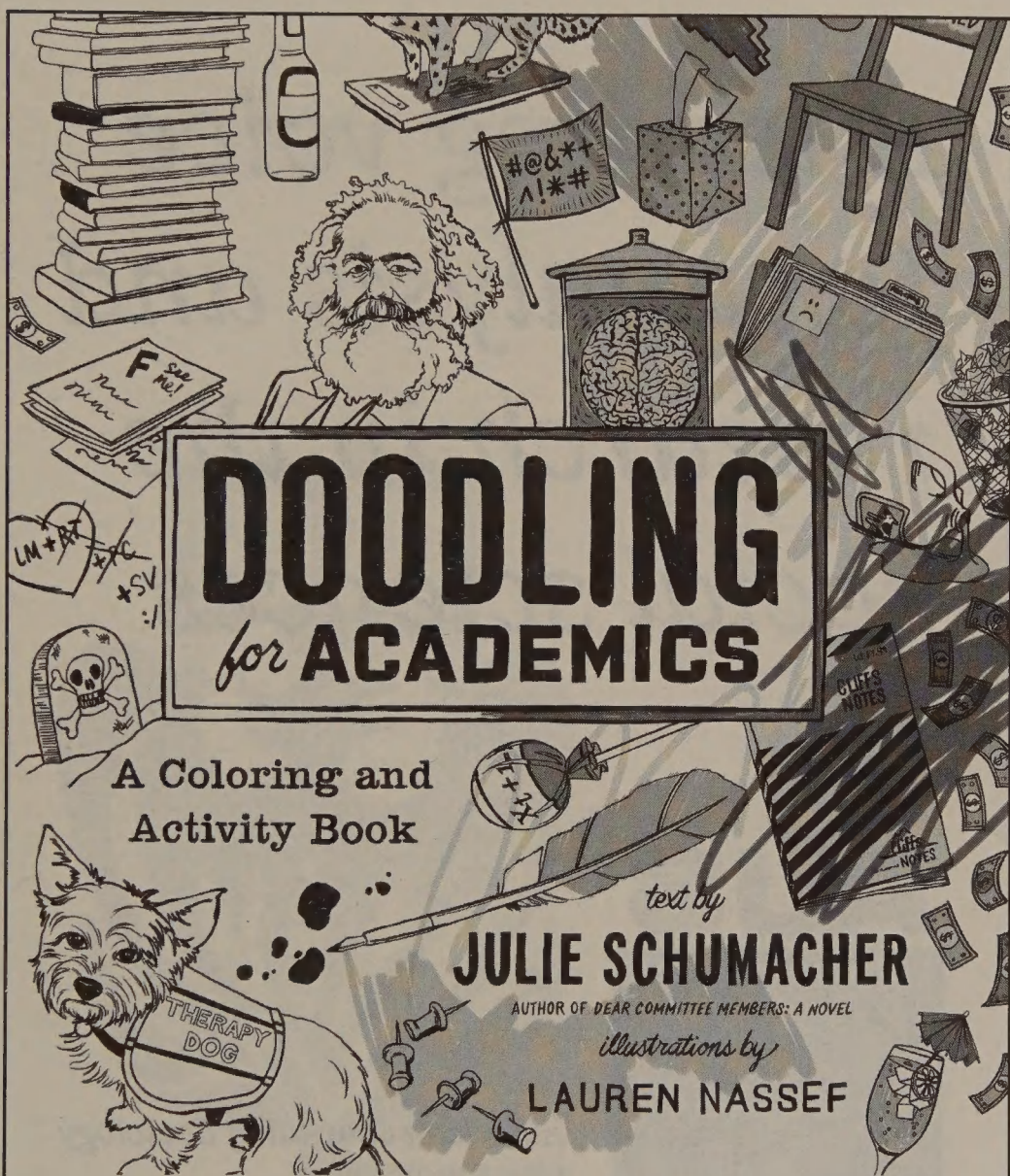
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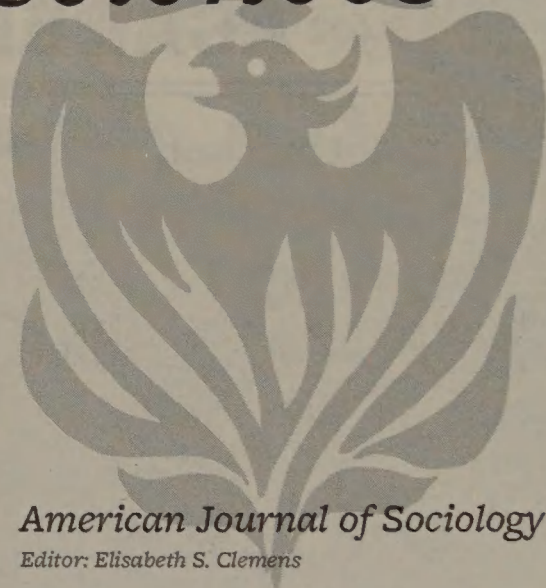


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